2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

the night something pulled his blanket off, and he was frightened. He ran back to the village and died shortly afterward of pneumonia."

CROWS HEART'S REMINISCENCES AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

When a man has a real dream, everything that is going to happen comes to him in his dream. Hairy Coat [owner of a People Above bundle], fasted nine days and everything he did came to him in his dreams. An animal came to him in his dream and said, "You have suffered long enough, and I am going to send you home now. I will give you one enemy, and you can go out and bring in his scalp." The Mandan did all this fasting to get scalps just as you white men are always working to get money.

I was twenty-three years old when I first went out to trap eagles. When the lodge was ready, the men went in. That night I knew the leader would suggest that someone should suffer for the birds. That day I looked around and found a sharp bank. On top of the bank I drove a sharp stake and tied a long lariat to it as securely as I could. I knew that the Old Male Black Bear [leader of eagle-trapping party] would suggest that I go out on the top of the hills to cry as long as I could, so I did this to be ready. When I finished driving the stake, I came back and got two men of my father's clan, one being the Good Shot, to go out with me to cut holes through the skin of my chest with an arrow and insert two sticks each two inches long through the holes. After they did it, they said the bank was too high to get down alone and that they would put the rope around my breast to let me down. I told them to leave me alone and go back to camp.

When they left, the lariat [30–35 feet long] was coiled up by the stake. I crawled over the edge and fell to the end of the rope. I got such a jerk that I lost my senses. When I came to, I found myself still hanging down. I cried and ran until I made a trail along the sharp edge. Then the weight became less painful.

That night there was a heavy frost. I cried all the time. I kept running, and it was very cold. I began at dark and suffered until about ten o'clock, when two of the hunters came after me. When they got there, they caught the rope and pulled me up to the top. They tried to take the sticks out, but the swellings were so great that they could not get them loose. I had to carry the rope and sticks in my arms to camp.

When we got there, the head man laid me up where the buffalo skull was. He used a big bunch of buffalo hair to thaw out the swelling, and then the sticks came out. After the sticks were out, I went back to bed, but the swelling extended from my navel to my chin. I rolled without sleeping until nearly daybreak. I could not sleep, so I got up early to see the flag on the hill. I wanted to see if we had the right kind of wind to go to the pits.

I found that we had the right kind of wind, came back to camp, wakened the others, and told them the wind was in the west, the right direction for trapping. My breast was so swollen I had to put the rope for carrying the bait around my forehead when walking to the pit. I put my bait where it was supposed to be and sat there in the pit looking up through the covering. Soon I heard a noise and looked up. There was a large eagle coming down. He sat on

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785 159 223 top of my bait, and I stuck my right hand out and caught him. He was a big beautiful eagle, and that was the result I got for my suffering the night before. Before I finished killing him, another big one came down on top of my pit and walked over to the bait. I caught him as I had the other one and pulled him into the pit where I killed him, and there was never a happier person than I. I forgot all about my pains. I was happy as I thought of what I had done the night before. I did not have to go very far to get results for the suffering I did the night before. After that the leader said, since I was lucky, I should get up mornings and look at the flag to see if the winds were right.

787 785 159 If a man goes out on the hills to fast and suffer and some holy person or animal comes to him and tells him that he will be lucky and kill an enemy, but when he goes out as leader, the enemy kills one of his party instead, he will come home crying because the people will think that he didn't fast right or that his dream wasn't real. Brave men will start fasting again and seek an even stronger god by fasting longer and offering their flesh to the Sun. The older men watch one who has lost a warrior when he fasts. If the suffering is too severe, men of his father's clan pay him to stop for fear that he will kill himself. After he has suffered a while, the parents of the warrior who was killed in battle will give a feast to the man and ask him to stop. When a leader goes out to war as a result of the promise of a certain animal and loses one of his men, he will reject that animal's vision instructions if sent to him again in a dream. He will keep on fasting until another god comes to him. It is often hard to get men to follow an unlucky leader. If he goes out a second time and kills or strikes an enemy, the people will say, "You have a real protector now, one that is going to be a great help to you."

My god is the horse. When I was a young man, I led a horse around the sacred cedar standing in the center of Like-a-Fishhook Village by means of thongs in my flesh until I fell down unconscious. As I lay there, a horse came to me and promised me success in hunting and warfare. I killed two enemies a long ways from home because of this dream. The horse sang me his sacred songs, but I am not allowed to sing them for you. I have done all the things the horse asked of me, and the horse has done everything he promised me he would. The doctoring you saw me do did not come from the instructions the horse gave me. The sharp stick I used for letting out matter came from my rights in the Big Bird ceremony my sisters and I bought of Big Black, my father's brother.

726 159 I can illustrate by a story how a man organizes a war party to go out for the enemy that his god has promised him. The leader is careful to do just as he was instructed.

The party was to leave from Fishhook Village. The leaders were Old Bear (Tamisik clan), Crows Breast (Tamisik clan), and Porcupine Head (Speckled Eagle clan). I joined the party because of a suggestion by Afraid To Be Chief [his mother's brother and head of the lodge at that time] that he had no horses. If we got horses, we would be pretty well fixed. When a party of this kind is made up, they do not announce it but act quietly in preparation for the trip. A night was set to leave. Those planning to join got together a supply of moccasins and food. A lodge was designated as our meeting place. The party met this time in Two Chief's lodge. Others came to look on and wish us luck so that the lodge was packed full of people.

In addition to the leaders mentioned already, there were these warriors in the party: Big Steal (Tamisik clan), Long Tail (Prairie Chicken clan), Afraid

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Chapter VII

EAGLE-TRAPPING CEREMONY[1]

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CAPTURING eagles from concealed pits[2] was practiced by all tribes of the Northern Plains. So far as our meager information indicates, the technique was essentially the same for a large number of tribes occupying territory adjacent to the Mandan and Hidatsa. Less is known of the ceremonial aspect of the practice, organization of expeditions, values of feathers for decoration, number of leaders, inheritance of rites and skills, or the socioreligious position of its shaman.

Shooting young developed eagles was uncommon, but both Mandan and Hidatsa informants claimed that the Crows made less use of pits, since they lived near the Rocky Mountains, where most of the birds nested and were able to shoot them in trees or near decoys. Such information as the literature gives indicates that all the tribes of the Upper Missouri River Region adjacent to the Mandan and Hidatsa used the pit method of trapping.

In this discussion of eagle-trapping it is proposed to indicate the territory claimed by the Mandan and Hidatsa, the technique of securing birds, mythological background, inheritance of rights to trap, as well as the economic and religious position of leaders in the tribal life.[3]

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Eagle-trapping by the Mandan and Hidatsa was confined to the rough lands adjacent to wooded streams. The ceremonial lodge for the men and the wood or hide tepees for the women and children were always erected in sheltered spots among the high trees along streams, while the pits were dug on the top or

1. For a detailed account of practices associated with eagle-trapping see Gilbert Livingston Wilson, *Hidatsa Eagle Trapping* ("Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History," Vol. XXX [1929]), pp. 99–245.

2. For Maximilian's short account of eagle-trapping see Reuben Gold Thwaites (ed.), *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, XXIII (Cleveland, 1906), 346.

3. Eagle-trapping rites and beliefs for both the Mandan and the Hidatsa are treated together in this chapter, since tribal differences were insignificant.

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near the top of hills or on benchlands adjacent to the streams (see Figs. 25–27). Of the total area claimed by these two tribes, only a small part of the entire territory was suitable for trapping, and that was confined to narrow sections of river country (see Fig. 28).

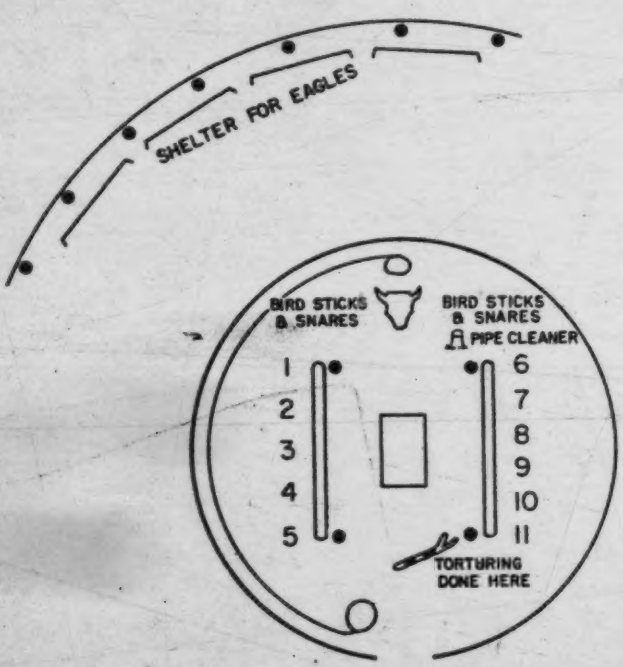

FIG. 25.—Plan of eagle-trapping lodge. *1*, Wolf Eyes—leader (Maxoxati-H); *2*, Big Walker—assistant leader (Tamisik-M); *3*, Little Crow (Low Hat); *4*, Lance-owner (3 clan); *5*, White Body (Maxoxati); *6*, Holding Eagle—Crack Shot (Prairie Chicken); *7*, Little Bull (Knife); *8*, Black Bear (Knife); *9*, Sitting Woman (Prairie Chicken); *10*, Bears Arm (Knife); *11*, Louie Wolf—waiter (Water-buster).

Historic accounts of these two tribes give little information on eagle-trapping, but there are frequent references to their value in trade. The standard price of a good horse was three war bonnets containing a total of one hundred and eight black-tipped feathers, which would be the feathers from nine birds.

Archeological evidence verifies native tradition of the great antiquity of eagle-trapping. In the rough country west of the Missouri River there are thousands of depressions marking the sites of former pits. These pits vary from sharply rectangular

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796 forms with rotted sections of the cover still protruding to gently
223 rounded depressions now nearly filled by erosional activity. The
172 number of pits, together with their wide distribution, points to a universal practice of considerable antiquity.

796 During the century 1770–1870 there was a general northward
223 movement of the Mandan and Hidatsa which was accompanied
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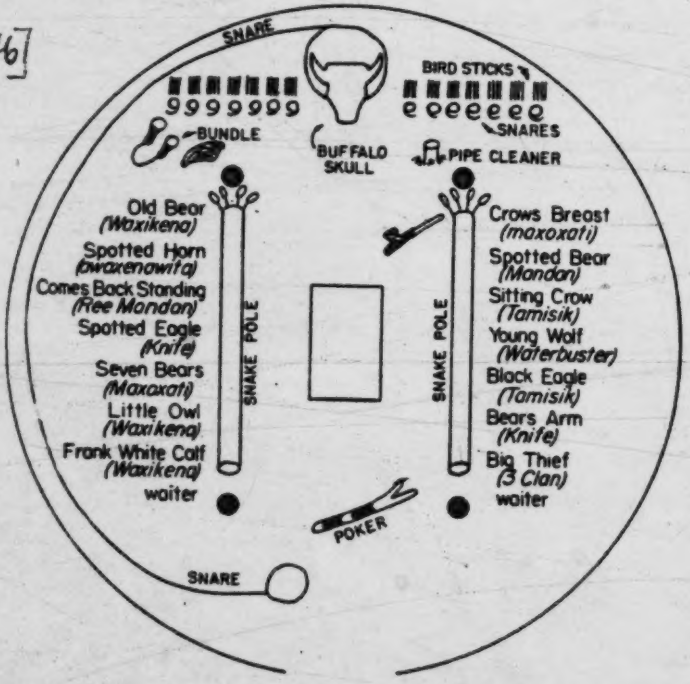

FIG. 26.—Floor plan of eagle-trapping lodge, Old Bear, leader. Bird sticks: *1*, "Both Ends White"; *2*, "Speckled"; *3*, "Four Stripes"; *4*, "The Young One."

by a shift in eagle-trapping territory. Crows Heart (Mandan), who had been on many trapping expeditions with both Mandan and Hidatsa leaders, stated that the Mandan claimed eagle-trapping rights to the territory on both sides of the Missouri River from Like-a-Fishhook Village to the Yellowstone and along the Little Missouri River to its headwaters. While living in the Heart River region, the Mandan claimed trapping rights to all the rough lands between the Little and Big Missouri rivers as far west as Powder River in Montana. To the south

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FIG. 27.—Eagle-trapping camp and pits, Old Bear, leader. (Drawn by Bears Arm to show himself fasting when seventeen years of age.)

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they trapped along the Cannonball River and in the Black Hill region, especially along the north side, which was jointly occupied with the Cheyenne, whom he believed used the same methods and followed the same rituals. He had heard the old men say that it was understood that the eagle-trapping season should not be marked by bloodshed between the two tribes, or the trappers would have bad luck, and that their camps were often only a short distance apart. There would be visiting between camps and good-natured joking about the potency of their respective bundles. He further added that, through misfortune, the Mandan died off in such large numbers that they were obliged to relinquish most of their territory and establish a new territory which Hidatsa leaders had relinquished through simultaneous misfortunes. He had also heard the old men say that before abandoning the Cannonball region the Arikara, who then lived as far north as the Grand River to the south, had a similar treaty with the Sioux not to fight during the eagle-trapping season and at that time began to come into Mandan territory to make trouble. Since one was not permitted to carry his weapons to the pit,[4] a practice observed until trapping was abandoned a few years ago, the Mandan decided that it would be best to abandon their Cannonball River sites. New sites were established in Hidatsa trapping territory after the Mandan moved from the Heart River region to join the Hidatsa. Crows Heart had often visited the Crows and had heard them say they preferred to shoot the young birds, while still near their nesting places, to sitting in pits. There was also a period when the Snake Indians bothered the trappers, but he thought that it was not so long ago, as the Indians had horses by that time.[5]

A few leaders went to the east side of the Missouri River while occupying the Heart River region. Pits were dug as far east as Dog Den Butte and around Devils Lake. This was a limited territory since, in general, the country was too flat on the east side of the Missouri for successful trapping.

Ownership of a site was vested in the leader who had either purchased the lodge and adjacent pits from a man of his own

4. This practice suggests that a truce between tribes was quite universal before the introduction of the horse.

5. No doubt he referred to a recent eastward movement of Shoshonean-speaking groups after the appearance of the horse on the Northern Plains.

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clan or who had occupied unclaimed territory, erected his own lodge, and marked the outlines of pits. Inheritance of trapping sites was through the clan, and one could not secure permanent ownership of a trapping site owned by a man of a different clan. The nearest clan relative took possession of the site upon the death of the owner if it had not been sold. One could pay for permission to use a particular site for a season from one of a different clan when the owner did not intend to make use of it himself, but he was obliged to use the pits already dug and could not prepare new ones. In other words, a man could rent a site from an owner of a different clan, but he could not buy. When a site had been abandoned so long that its owner was not known, another could claim the site. Evidently little trouble was experienced over claims to sites, since a violator would have been severely criticized. There was, in addition, a religious taboo, since both the eagles and the bears belonging to the ritual occupied major bundle status in each tribe, and a trespasser could never have attained a position of prominence in either tribe.

The ritualistic differences between the Mandan and Hidatsa were no greater than those between separate bundle lines within the same village. Wolf Chief's narrative (to be quoted later) illustrates the extent to which one tribe borrowed from the other in purchasing an eagle-trapping bundle. His father, Small Ankles, purchased his rights from Big Cloud, who advised him to receive his instructions from Arrowhead Earrings, a Mandan, who was better informed. A study of individual bundle lines reveals that borrowing back and forth has been going on regularly since the smallpox epidemic of 1837, and from traditional information from informants this also applied to all their neighboring tribes as well. In native theory the particular ritual practiced at any time depended on these three factors: (1) the instructions received when the bundle was transferred; (2) elements of other eagle-trapping bundle rituals purchased; and (3) vision instructions.

A bundle-owner could sell his rights four times, and it was only when the fourth sale was made that the original bundle was transferred, new bundles being made up for the first three sales. The amount of instruction received depended on the desires of

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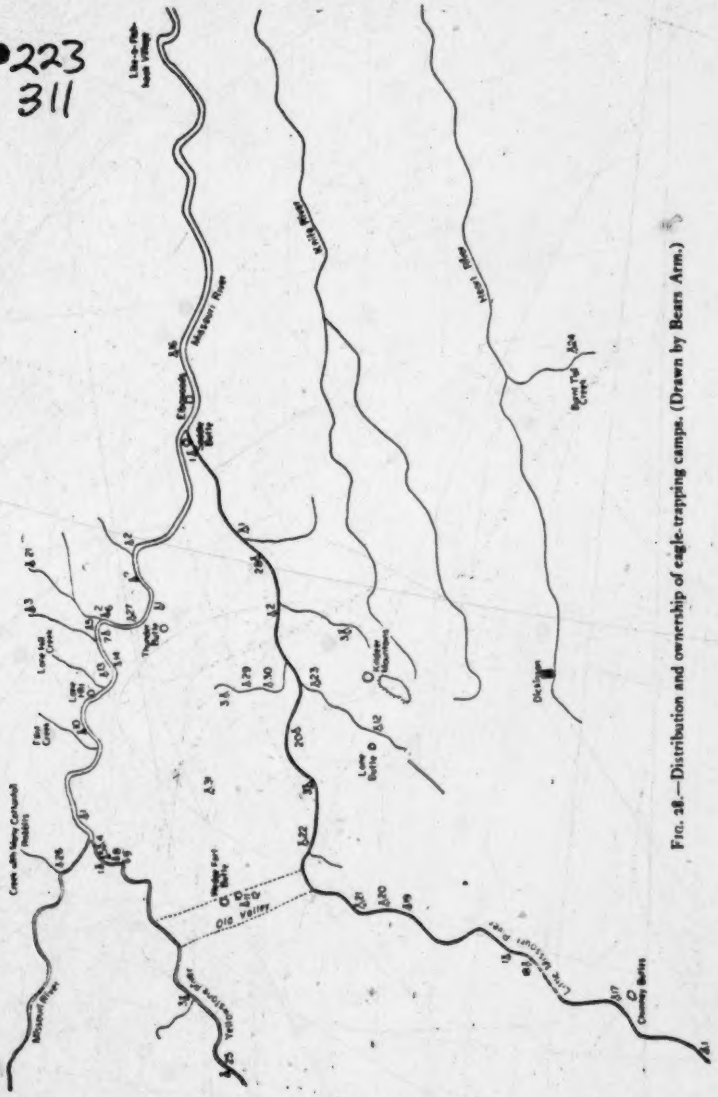

FIG. 28.—Distribution and ownership of eagle-trapping camps. (Drawn by Bears Arm.)

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KEY TO FIGURE 28

OWNERS OF EAGLE-TRAPPING CAMPS, THEIR TRIBE AND CLAN

1, Iron Eyes, Mandan, WaxikEna; *2*, Small Ankles, Hidatsa, Water-buster; *3*, Belly Up, Hidatsa, AwaxEnawita; *4*, Little Shield, Mandan, WaxikEna; *5*, Brave, Hidatsa, AwaxEnawita; *6*, Four Bears, Hidatsa, Water-buster; *7*, Guts, Hidatsa, Maxoxati; *8*, Bad Buffalo, Mandan, Prairie Chicken; *9*, Old Black Bear, Hidatsa, AwaxEnawita; *10*, Poor Wolf, Hidatsa, Water-buster; *11*, Good Bear, Hidatsa, Water-buster; *12*, Good Walker, Hidatsa, Water-buster; *13*, Crows Paunch, Hidatsa, Prairie Chicken; *14*, Enemy Dog, Mandan, WaxikEna; *15*, Cedar, Mandan, WaxikEna; *16*, Road Maker, Hidatsa, Water-buster; *17*, Hairy Coat, Hidatsa, Water-buster; *18*, Raven Wing, Hidatsa, Water-buster; *19*, Plain Tail (Big Coat), Hidatsa, Low Hat; *20*, Bad Coat, Hidatsa, Maxoxati; *21*, Old Bear, Mandan, WaxikEna; *22*, Wolf Eyes, Hidatsa, Maxoxati; *23*, His Horse Smells Him, Hidatsa, Maxoxati; *24*, Red Basket, Mandan, Prairie Chicken; *25*, Runs, Hidatsa (clan not known); *26*, Coyote, Hidatsa, Prairie Chicken; *27*, Bears Tail, Hidatsa, Prairie Chicken; *28*, Little Coyote (he would come up from Awaxawi Village at Knife River to trap here; this is probably a mythological camp); *29*, Bad Robe, Mandan, Tamisik; *30*, Bears Foot, Mandan (clan not known); *31*, Makes Everything Good, Hidatsa, Prairie Chicken.

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the purchaser. He could receive instructions and rights in a limited number of fundamental rites to trap eagles without going into the entire lore belonging to the ceremony. He could then lead trapping expeditions to established trapping grounds, open the lodge, receive the birds brought in by the trappers, and send the spirits away. He could not, however, dig new pits, make offerings to the holy women, or perform the many other simple rites associated with these expeditions. He would not attract the best trappers on his expeditions, as informants stated that successful trappers preferred to go out with leaders who had special rites for all situations likely to arise.

Some bundle-owners took particular interest in the mythology and rites belonging to eagle-trapping to the extent that supplementary purchases were made. In time, these leaders became authorities on eagle-trapping and received popular recognition comparable to specialists in any other pursuit such as warfare or hunting. Whenever such an owner discovered that another had a sacred song or simple rite used in connection with eagle-trapping, a purchase could be made, regardless of the clan of the seller. In this manner new elements modified or supplemented the original bundle rites.

The rites were further modified by vision instructions. When Bear on the Flat received his bundle from his father, Belly Up, he was instructed not to permit anyone to touch the snake poles. Subsequently, Bear on the Flat received a vision from the snakes in which he was advised to permit his trappers to wipe their hands on the poles as the snakes' portion of the meal.

Every major ceremony, whether Mandan or Hidatsa, had a mythological origin, and, in this respect, eagle-trapping ceremonies occupied major bundle status. In theory, eagle-trapping was first employed by two classes of small bears, the small black bears that had their pits on the east side of the Missouri River and the small brown bears that trapped on the west bank. There were seven mythological eagle-trapping camps at which these small bears were accustomed to meet in autumn to catch the young black-tipped eagles (see Fig. 29).

The brown-bear camps were at: (1) Thunder Butte; (2) Knife River, near the present town of Golden Valley; and (3) Heart River Ravine, near the town of New Salem. The black-bear

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camps were at: (1) One Cottonwood Camp, at the mouth of the Yellowstone; (2) First Trapping Camp, the high ridge south of Sanish; (3) Buckbrush Trapping Camp, south of Shell Creek; and (4) High Butte Trapping Camp, southeast of Like-a-Fish-hook Village.

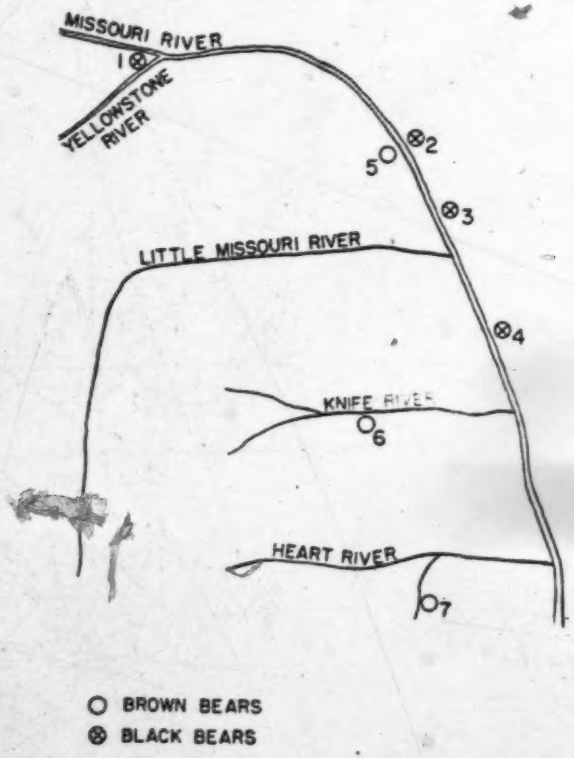

FIG. 29.—Mythological trapping camps of the Bears. *1*, One Cottonwood Camp; *2*, First Trapping Camp; *3*, Buckbrush Trapping Camp; *4*, High Butte Trapping Camp; *5*, Thunder Butte Trapping Camp; *6*, Sand Lodge Camp; *7*, Heart River Ravine Camp.

According to native belief, the small bears had trapped for a long time before the Indians received instruction in trapping. The theory of acquiring this supernatural knowledge conforms to the tribal pattern by which the world of the sacred is brought to the secular world through the medium of a hero. In this case, the hero was Black Wolf, who had been separated from a hunting party and was saved from starvation by a party of small black bears, then engaged in trapping eagles to the north of the

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Big Cloud's bundle was not complete; Iron Eyes had a main one.[22] Small Ankles would put up the lodge and put the snake pole in with the buffalo skull. He tied it into place with dark sage. I heard that once Old Woman's Grandson came in so they had the two poles brought in at that time to represent the snake.[23]

With respect to inheritance of trapping rights, rather marked differences exist between the Hidatsa and the Mandan. The former employed exclusively transfer from father to son or from individuals standing in the father-son relationship. Not a single instance of variation from the rule was observed except in the instance of Big Cloud's two sales to Wolf Eyes and Small Ankles. No doubt that exception can be traced to the circumstance that, though belonging to the Hidatsa Water-buster clan, Big Cloud lived in one of the Mandan villages with his Mandan father and Hidatsa mother. Hidatsa sales of trapping rights followed the normal pattern of bundle transfer from father to son, with a clan brother of the seller acting as sponsor to give instruction and prepare the bundle. Frequently a purchaser's brothers assisted in a joint purchase, taking possession upon death of the brother, but the next transfer would be to the son of original purchaser or his brother's son.

The small village of Awaxawi apparently had been strongly influenced by the Mandan, and clan inheritance was followed if the two bundles purchased just after the smallpox of 1837 were characteristic of all bundles formerly in the village prior to that epidemic.

Mandan inheritance of eagle-trapping bundles was affected by numerous factors. Except for the last generation in which it was from father to son, or other individuals standing in that relationship, inheritance was generally from one standing in the relationship of *pta'wadato'dE*, a special kinship term for the mother's brother and the mother's mother's brother. In tracing back inheritance of Mandan eagle-trapping bundles, one is impressed by a sudden change within a single generation to the Hidatsa pattern of purchasing from the father.

Iron Eyes' bundle had belonged in the WaxikEna clan for several generations. He purchased from his mother's brother before the Mandan united with the Hidatsa at Like-a-Fishhook

22. He means the principal bundle.

23. See the myth of Old Woman Who Never Dies, chap. vi, above.

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Village, but he sold to his son after living one generation with the Hidatsa. He inherited the eagle-trapping sites of his mother's brother, but his son, Ben Benson, did not inherit his father's trapping lodges, since they were of different clans. Trapping territory and lodges continued to be clan-inherited and were not affected by this change to father-son inheritance of bundles.

Residence also was a factor in determining Mandan bundle transfers. When marriage was arranged on the initiative of the girl's parents, who selected the husband, the girl and her husband lived with her parents. As soon as it was evident that the marriage would become permanent, the girl's parents undertook what was known as "building up the son-in-law's reputation." First they would secure a white buffalo robe, which they presented to their son-in-law, who in turn would offer it to his own father's bundle.

If the young man came to regard the parents-in-law highly, he would, when successful in warfare, present his mother-in-law with a scalp, after which he could speak to her at will. Small Ankles lived in the same lodge with his wife and her parents, and he received his eagle-trapping rights from his father-in-law, Big Cloud, who also sold to his younger brother, Wolf Eyes. Wolf Chief, son of Small Ankles, was eligible to buy from his father. He also was invited to own his father-in-law's (Chief, a Mandan) eagle-trapping rights. This was an instance where a man (Hidatsa) was eligible to purchase his father's rights but through marriage to a Mandan and living in his parents-in-law's lodge could, according to Mandan custom, have inherited his father-in-law's bundle and rights.

Wolf Chief gave an account of a bundle transfer as told to him by his father, Small Ankles. The account illustrates quite definitely a considerable interchange of elements between the Mandan and Hidatsa, resulting in an enriched ceremonial life for both groups. The Hidatsa think of Small Ankles' rites as Hidatsa, but this account will show that the chief body of lore connected with the bundle was drawn from the Mandan.

WOLF CHIEF'S NARRATIVE OF A BUNDLE TRANSFER

I do not own the trapping rights, and by custom I should not tell; but, since I have changed my ways, I will. My father, Small Ankles, did not get the rights from his father but from Big Cloud, his father-in-law. Before Big

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Cloud[24] died, he told my father that it would be better for him to put up a sweat and thus receive the Small Bear, for he might get some use out of it. When people in the future would make offerings to the bears, he would receive presents.

Small Ankles told me that he got this Small Bear shortly after the smallpox. He said to me, "I treated my father-in-law well; he was like an older brother to me; that was the reason why he asked me to buy the medicines. I had to put up the sweat and some articles before I received it. At that time there were few trade goods, so I went out for buffaloes and saved about twenty-five hides. I had them tanned by the women. I prepared a sweat bath and called Big Cloud. He showed me two feet belonging to the little bear; one was without hide and was called Bone Foot. It was difficult to find a man who knew all the songs, but we remembered that there was a man named White Finger Nails. He had a son who knew the holy songs, so he was selected to come in and sing the songs. That man was a Mandan, Calf Woman's mother's father, named Arrowhead Earrings.[25] Big Cloud did not own a complete bundle but had only part of the rites and songs, so they selected this man since he knew them all. The man selected I called "father" because he and my father were in some way distantly related. Also I said that it would be best to have my father-in-law there too, for he knew some of the songs and knew how to put up the trap with the songs for the baits and pits. They met together to have the ceremony." Small Ankles was there. Big Cloud gave his medicines to Small Ankles and taught him how to trap, sing the songs, and set the baits. Then the other man gave him a small piece of bear hide and foot, telling him that when out trapping, if bad luck came, he could call him "father" and say what he wished to say, and Arrowhead Earrings would remember.

Big Cloud received the ten hides and said, "It will be all the better to let this other man have fifteen hides and a horse, for he is the one who did most to give you a complete ceremony."

When they covered the sweat lodge with the robes, there was a buffalo skull and the medicines that were to go to Small Ankles inside. Then they sang the holy songs. Big Cloud gave Small Ankles the bear foot, three snares, and eagle down, saying, "I give these to use when trapping; keep them in good order." Then they went in and sang a holy song and called some of the people to come in front of the sweat to be cleansed of the evil spirits.

There were not many people there, for most of the eagle-trapping bundles had died out during the smallpox; all who did own such bundles came there. Arrowhead Earrings said to Small Ankles, "When you go out eagle-trapping, remember this medicine is connected with trapping fish too, so you must not trap both in the same year. If you do, you will surely get into trouble, for this is holy. It is best to change off and go out after eagles one year and catch fish the next. If you use both the same year, trouble will come, for the fish have the stronger spirit."

There was a holy man with eagle medicine named Medicine Eagle [Mandan]. Small Ankles heard that he was holy and learned that, when any of the

24. Big Cloud had no sons and was living with his daughter, who had married Small Ankles.

25. Arrowhead Earrings was a Mandan of the WaxikEna clan and custodian of the Okipa lodge, where he lived with his family when the lodge was not needed for the ceremonies. His eagle-trapping rights were secured from White Finger Nails.

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people wanted to make offerings to the eagles, Medicine Eagle would draw the picture of the things that they offered.

Small Ankles said, "I was trying to call him to come to my place and inquired what he did about making the signs for the eagle, thinking that it would help me in eagle-trapping. I called him in and told him I would like to own 'how he drew the picture,' and the man said he was willing to let me have it. He said it was not necessary to put up a big sweat and ceremony but to give enough articles, and he would show me how. He also owned a holy song for eagle-trapping which I could use. He gave them both to me to use.

" 'I will save enough hides to buy it from you,' and the man said that he would be ready any time. I looked up eight hides and my wife tanned them. A mare and colt were included. I put up a feast besides and told the medicine man that I was ready to own the medicine. The man came painted. His face was red; his hair was over his forehead; he wore the longest wing feathers. He came in, and I said, 'Here is the material I have put up to own your medicine song; here are two sticks which represent the mare and colt; this food also goes along with it.'

"When the man saw that, he said, 'I am satisfied with it, my son. You have put up all these things, and I am happy.' I had a pipe ready and handed it to him. He called for a little fire and I carried him a coal, but before he began to smoke he held up his pipe to the sky and prayed, then to the ground, and then to the birds of the four directions. When he finished smoking, he said that he would sing the holy song which belonged to the bait and show me how to draw the picture, for, when any man makes an offering to the eagles, then that man will have the right to draw a picture on his robe.[26] Medicine Eagle said, 'I will show you how to make the picture, for one who makes an offering to his own medicines, the eagles. I have a holy song for that.' I [Small Ankles] was taught the song, and the man said that he had already heard that I had bought the right to trap and now with my holy song it would be all the easier to trap an eagle. He taught how to sing the holy song, but one was not supposed to sing it aloud, just loud enough so that the people could hear it. The song had some words.

Female eagles come back first.

"Then he taught me how to draw the picture and said, 'Some day the people may make an offering to the eagles, and then you can draw the picture. Have some mud on a stick. When you draw the picture, make first a crooked line for lightning and then one straight line alternating until you have made six or eight figures representing lightning. Pull out one of the wing feathers and put it on one corner of whatever they offer when you finish drawing the pictures. When you have finished, cut an ash stick and put the robe around it with sage fastened on the top of it. Have a belt around the middle. Put it beside the door of his lodge so that it will stand there. When you go out eagle-trapping, remember the holy song and think whether you are getting enough birds. If you think you are not getting enough, use that song, singing it on the way to the pit or while smoking the bait. When you go into the pit, sing it. When you are at the pit, lift the bait in the air to the west and sing. If an eagle shows up while you are singing, it means that you will be successful. Do not sing this song often, only when you need it very badly.' "

26. The practice of painting robes to depict bundle rights was universal with the Mandan but uncommon with the Hidatsa.

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Small Ankles did not go out often, for there were many enemies. He did not like to go because of that. I went out along the Little Missouri River to Shoot-in-Nose Creek, and Small Ankles said I was four years old then. Then, Old Woman Crawling, Flying Above, and Big Cloud were along. There were old pits, but no one knew whose, so they fixed them in the same places. That is all right if one did not know whose they were. Many eagles were flying. One man stayed at home to protect the women. Big Cloud told of birds destroying the bait when the enemy appeared on the hill. The men freed the birds and ran away from the place. They traveled all night coming back.

The actual transfer of the bundle was a public event in both tribes. When a Hidatsa transfer was to be made, a clan brother of the seller occupied an important place, giving the instructions beforehand and directing the ceremonial transfer. He was recipient of most of the goods offered in payment. Attending the transfer ceremony and feast were all persons, male or female, owning a bundle containing a buffalo skull. These participants were considered the major bundle-owners of the tribe.

Mandan public transfer of this bundle was direct from seller to purchaser, and the only persons entitled to attend were legitimate owners of Eagle-trapping, Big Bird (this includes eagles, hawks, owls, thunder), Snake, and Bear bundles. Instruction in the techniques and rites of eagle-trapping was received directly from the seller without the assistance of a clan father. Each legitimate participant at the transfer received payment for his attendance and prayed for the success of the purchaser. Instruction was received from the seller privately, and appropriate payments were made from time to time during the period of apprenticeship. For instance, the buyer would be told that he should have so much goods ready at a stated time, and he would be taught how to erect the lodge; at another time how to dig the pits; etc. Each song would require its appropriate payment. When the feast was given, all knew that the buyer had received at least the minimum information necessary for leading eagle-trapping expeditions. Both tribes employed public transfers as an instrument for informing the population at large of the buyer's legitimate right to perform the ceremony. Transfer was always made in the village and never while on the trapping grounds.

There were two methods of organizing an eagle-trapping party depending on the inclination of the leader or bundle-owner. Some leaders selected their trappers, while others announced

.2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

223 their intentions of trapping at certain localities and called for volunteers. The bundle-owner was leader, and his authority began as soon as the party left the village. Announcement that they would be trapping at a specified site was made in the village as soon as a party was organized, in order that hunting parties or other eagle-trapping parties would know their whereabouts.

Trapping parties left for the trapping sites when the leaves began to change color in the fall. In the party would be the leadder and his trappers, together with their wives and children. It [224] being customary to hunt game for the winter's needs when the winds were not from a westerly direction, the women were taken along to cure the meat and prepare the hides.

223 346 Two types of lodges were used in connection with eagle-trapping. According to tradition, when Black Wolf visited the bears, he found them using a grass lodge consisting of a sweat-lodge frame covered with grass mats. When this lodge was used, the rigid rules associated with eagle-trapping were dispensed with. The bears had said, "When you use the grass lodge, there will be no rules." Any suitable location for the lodge could be agreed upon where it would be centrally located in relation to the pits. Neither were there rules governing the excavation of pits nor the appropriation of old ones. Each trapped where he chose, killed the birds, and secured the feathers. This type lodge was rarely used except when trapping in new territory under circumstances such that it was considered unlikely that the party would ever return there again to trap.

223 346 778 The second type lodge was known as the wood lodge. There were two variants of this type. When it was planned to return to the locality again, it was constructed on a four-post standard, each post having a fork at the top on which poles were suspended forming a square. The sides of the lodge were built by leaning poles against this standard to form a roughly conical structure. Bark and earth were banked around the outer edge of the lodge to a height of three feet for warmth and protection from attack. This was the preferred type lodge. With it went ownership of the adjacent pits and hunting territory. It was the residence of the males and was owned by the leader who had directed its construction. When used in connection with eagle-trap-

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

ping, the full ritual belonging to the bundle was used. These were permanent sites and were used from year to year. (The camps indicated in Fig. 28 used this lodge.) Transfer of ownership was through the clan, although a leader of a different clan could pay for the right to use a lodge and pits for a season when neither the owner nor a member of the owner's clan intended to use it.

A variant of the pole lodge was generally used when a new territory was being explored for the first time. In exterior form it resembled the four-post lodge but lacked the standard on which the poles were leaned. The structure was begun by lashing four poles together in the manner of the four-pole tepee of the Plains, after which poles were leaned together at the top forming a circular base and conical exterior. The base had the same exterior covering of bark and earth for protection from the weather as well as defense from enemies.

Many of these pole lodges are still to be found, even though eagle-trapping was generally discontinued fifty years ago. In the autumn of 1932 the writer accompanied Bear on the Flat, Crows Heart, and Mark Mato on an eagle-trapping expedition and use was made of a lodge and pits owned by Iron Eyes (born into the WaxikEna clan but raised in the Prairie Chicken clan), a member of Bear on the Flat's clan.

When a trapping party returned to an old site, the first duty was to repair the trapping lodge. Broken poles were taken out of the wall and replaced by new ones, after which the sides were banked with bark and earth. When six or eight men were in the party, the lodge was the size of the regular hide tepee. When parties of fourteen to twenty men went out, the lodge was enlarged to twenty-five or thirty feet in diameter. Hide tepees were never used for the men when on eagle-trapping expeditions. The lodge was always concealed in a thicket of timber near running water. The head of the lodge was in a westerly direction, usually more north than west so that the entrance was in a general direction of the Missouri River's course. The head of the lodge and adjacent area on that side of the lodge were considered holy. One could not cut wood, perform tasks not related to the ceremonies, or loiter there. The sweat lodge was south of the trapping lodge. The women erected their hide tepees or pole lodges without the four-post standard, and their drying scaffolds were

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in line with the entrance of the ceremonial lodge to the east. Before the introduction of horses, women lived in pole lodges, but these lodges were replaced with hide tepees as soon as possession of horses became general.

When returning to a site that had been used the former year, the two poles representing the snakes were brought from their place on the west side of the lodge and placed at the door; otherwise new ones were cut and brought to the lodge. Before the leader carried in the sacred bundle, he would sing the Song to the Lodge, with the trappers seated around him. After this he addressed the bundle, announced that trapping was about to commence, and asked for good luck from the Bears, the Buffalo, and the Snare. He then entered the lodge, invited the Buffalo and the trappers to come in, and placed the Buffalo skull and bundle at the head of the lodge.

When all were inside, the leader sang the Song of the Snakes and called for the two snake poles, which were brought in and placed one on the left side and the other on the right side of the lodge with the large ends representing the heads pointed toward the head of the lodge and the altar. The leader then produced a short sharp stick, usually decorated with porcupine quills, and marked off the limits of the fireplace, after which a rectangular pit was excavated. The rectangular shape of the fireplace was symbolic of the eagle-trapping pit, while the fire was addressed as "Grandfather," meaning that "it goes back in time to the beginning of things." The two ash poles were then placed on opposite sides of the fireplace. The pole on the left side represented the male snake and the one on the right side represented the female.[27] According to Mandan-Hidatsa tradition, Two Men[28] once came along and stopped with a party trapping eagles and informed the leader that the eagles ate snakes while the snakes preferred to eat eagle down. In that way snake poles were used in the ceremonial lodge for the men to place their heads on while sleeping.

The leader placed a juneberry branch tied up with white sage, representing the moon and also identified with the black-tipped

27. The arrangement of these two poles was symbolic of the lodge in Red Butte, visited by Grandson, where the snakes slept with their heads on poles at opposite sides of the fire.

28. Lodge Boy and Spring Boy of Hidatsa mythology.

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eagle, and a fiber snare over the entrance. The sun, also identified with the speckled eagle, was represented by a chokecherry branch and a fiber snare tied over the front standard above the altar.

Then followed the assignment of places for the duration of the trapping season and the selection of officers. Until the assignment of places was made, the leader gave no indication of the selections he contemplated making. The leader's place was at the head of the lodge on the right side. For the place next to him he would select an assistant, whenever possible one who also had eagle-trapping rights. At the end of the row next to the door he would place the waiter. For the left side opposite the leader he would select the "Chief of the Hunters" or "Crack Shot." Next he would select an assistant to the Chief of the Hunters. In mythological times these last two positions were occupied by a single officer, Bear Cub, until Two Men stole his earthen pot. When they found that they could not escape from the Cub, they agreed to do the hunting for the bears, as they were arrows in spirit. When the party was quite large, a second waiter was selected to sit at the end of the line.

The assignment of "bird sticks" varied with different leaders. Bear on the Flat used twelve bird sticks cut from chokecherry branches, to which he tied pieces of calico. These sticks were stuck into the ground in a row in front of the buffalo skull. They represented the twelve tail feathers of the eagle and also the birds that belong in the eagle family according to native belief. Iron Eyes and Ben Benson placed one bird stick on the altar for each member of the party. Each stick was decorated with a piece of flint,[29] a strip of rabbit skin, and some white sage. Old Bear, a Mandan, placed four bird sticks at the altar for each trapper, representing four types of eagles—the bald-headed, speckled, four stripes (on tail feathers), and calumet (white tail feathers with black tips) varieties. Small Ankles gave each of his trappers two bird sticks decorated with calico. One was offered to the calumet and the other to all the other eagles.

After the lodge was entered, assignment of pits was in order. When returning to habitual trapping grounds, it was rarely necessary to dig new pits. The right to dig new pits was by a sepa-

29. See chap. ix for origin of flint knives.

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rate purchase, and all leaders did not possess this. Purchasers received a short ash digging stick for laying out the corners of the pit and the right to sing the Song to the Pit. Lacking this right, it was necessary for a leader to select an established camp of a clan brother or a site which he had formerly purchased or borrowed, as he could not lay claim to a new site without the right to dig new pits. It was customary for a leader to return to the same site year after year, except that he could not lead eagle-trapping expeditions and put out a fish trap the same year.

When new pits were to be dug, the trapper made his own selection of the site and then called for the leader to mark the corners, which was done with the small ash stick while singing the Song to the Pit at each of the corners. He received payment for this service.

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In order to avoid disputes when selecting pits, the leader would name two men to select their pits until each trapper had a pit. It was believed that the birds would not come down if disputes occurred. The first day in camp was usually spent in preparing the trapping lodge and assigning the pits. In the evening when the lodge was completed and the altar had been set up, the leader went out and called the birds, told them that the lodge was ready, informed the trappers of the rules, and sang the trapping songs.

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When the writer was on one of these trapping expeditions in 1932, Bear on the Flat gave us the following instructions in this order. Mark Mato served as interpreter. The main points stressed by Bear on the Flat were of necessity recorded in brief outline.

BEAR ON THE FLAT'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR EAGLE-TRAPPING

When the four-post eagle-trapping lodges are put up, the eagle-trapping owner should come out to that site each fall. When a person comes to a region for one season and knows that he will not return to the same site next season, he puts up the simple tepee-shaped lodge without the four central posts.

When lodges were used formerly, twelve to twenty trappers went out; the lodges were approximately twenty-five feet in diameter, and the snake poles were relatively larger. No one was allowed to touch the snake poles. If someone did, Old Black Bear punched him severely with one of the bird poles used as a poker for the fire. Children were pinched severely by anyone near at hand.

It is customary to wipe the hands on the snake poles after eating, as the snakes' share of the meal. Men sleep at night with their heads on the snake

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poles. Now, Bear on the Flat has asked the snakes to let them touch the poles, and the snakes came in a dream and gave him permission.

In mythological times Black Bear was alive and sat at the left side of the entrance, but in later years they put a bear skull and hide down. Now, they merely imagine that he is there, and in place of him put a skin on the altar.

The sun was represented on the back standard or crosspiece by a hoop of twisted wheat grass and a chokecherry twig to hang it on. The cherry represents the speckled eagle. At the front on a crosspiece was a twisted grass hoop on a juneberry twig, the hoop representing the moon and the twig the black-tipped eagle.

When an eagle is caught, it is to be brought in on the left side of the door. Short gray sage will be used to smoke the bird. Then the bird is thrown toward the buffalo skull, whether the bird is dead or alive.

When the first eagle is caught, it is put next to Post 1,[30] and a ball of parched corn is given to the bird and its blessing asked. Afterward each member of the party partakes of the corn.

Koicita is the name of the head man or Old Male Black Bear. If the party is large, he does not trap but keeps the lodge fire burning. Then he is not expected to go into the pits. In case the hunters are out after game because of adverse winds and the winds change to the west, he can go into any of their pits. Crows Heart is the Map'si or Chief of the Hunters and gets his orders from the Koicita. He should stay at Post 2[31] and receive eagles when brought in; also he should supply the camp with meat.

Evenings the party is expected to go into the sweat lodge, and each has his own place there. When in the sweat lodge, anyone can put in the rocks, but the same order of naming the rocks is carried out; when putting in the first rock, he says, "This is the mother of birds." He says for the second stone, "This is the child of the mother of birds." For the third he says, "This is the oldest bird." For the fourth he says, "This is the genuine speckled eagle." The rest of the stones are thrown in without ceremony.

It is believed that when the birds are ready to come southeast, they send a scout ahead to see if there is a lodge. If there is one, it peeps into the lodge. If it sees the offering on the twelve bird poles, it goes back to the land of the birds and tells what it saw. Then the birds know that the people of that lodge are showing respect for them, while the people know that all the sky-gods will be gathering around that lodge. That is the reason only those who know the proper ceremonies to the gods gathering there can be at the head of eagle-trapping.

During the mythological period, Buffalo said to Black Bear, "I am always lucky. Place me at the head of the lodge, and you will be the owner of some fine eagle down." Since that time, whenever a bird is caught, some of its down is given to the Black Bear hide near the buffalo skull.

A buffalo-bull horn is used to throw water on the rocks of the sweat lodge. Only those who buy the rights can make a sweat. Bear on the Flat bought his rights from his father. The bird poles are used to poke the fire as well as for pulling coals from the fire for the pipe. The gods are like humans; some are jealous, while others are good to the people and work for their welfare.

A rock is put into the trapping pit. If you get sleepy, put it under your

30. The post next to which the leader sits (see plan of lodge, Fig. 26).
31. Opposite the leader.

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796 223 head. If you drowse, you will roll off of it, and in that way the rock won't let you go to sleep.

When earth is taken from the four corners of the pit, a prayer is spoken assuring you that everything harmful to the human body or spirit has been removed. Persons going into pits can't scratch themselves or the birds will have poor feathers. They will be old birds and covered with insects.

796 223 773 When Black Bear was on the earth, he ate birds and everything else he could catch. One day he was in the pits when he heard a thundering noise. This noise recurred for three days. On the fourth day a large rock fell on him. While he was unconscious, Buffalo packed him off to the north where the old bears lived. Father of Black Bear was there after the boy was taken north. Buffalo was at the head of the lodge alive. The father of the Black Bear set fire to the lodge. As Buffalo was coming out, Old Black Bear caught Buffalo long enough to singe him from the chest down; that is why the hair is long on the buffalo's back but short on the chest; that is also why the buffalo skull is placed at the head of the lodge, for he is lucky and will bring good luck.

Crows Heart represents the Black Bear Cub who once packed an earthenware vessel on his back and wandered aimlessly about in the neighborhood of the Heart River. There he was met by two Mandans, called the Two Men, on the high ridge six miles south of Bismarck and nearly opposite the Huff site. One of the Two Men was foolish; the other was wise. The foolish one asked of Black Bear Cub, "What do you eat? You carry that pot on your back for nothing."

Cub said, "I have plenty of food, and I can cook my meal any time I want to."

Saying that, he spit on his left arm and sang a sacred song. They heard a sound in the skies, the noise made by an eagle coming down to perch on Cub's uplifted arm. When it lit, Cub strangled it with the hemp rope which he put over the bird's head. Then he began to pull out the feathers. After that he packed the meat into the kettle. Although the kettle was small, he was able to pack it all in. When the meat was ready, he placed four bunches of sage in the form of a square around the pot, singing this song:

Water flow into the kettle.
Fire burn round the kettle.
Kettle boil.

Everything took place simultaneously with the uttering of the words. The fourth song said:

This kettle is sacred.

And his meal was cooked. In this manner he got a meal from little effort.

The Two Men thought they should live leisurely also, so they stole the kettle and ran away to hide in all the prominent hills with names. Every time they went into one of the hills, Cub would come with his rope and pull the hill down. Then the occupants of the hill would drive the Two Men out. So they went from hill to hill, the Killdeer Mountains, Thunder Buttes [south of Sanish], Eagle Buttes, Birds Bill Butte, and then to Dog Den Butte where the hills now lean. Dog Den Butte was the home of many gods and was considered very holy. The Two Men fortified themselves there. Cub came with his rope, which he threw around the hill, and pulled on the hill.

The Two Men, having no other place to go, gave themselves up. Cub was going to kill them, but they said they would be his servants and do his hunt-

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ing. On the eagle-trapping expeditions these two men supplied the meat for the camp. This party being small, only Crows Heart has that office. He should sleep opposite the Old Black Bear.

You should be tortured and cry for the birds to have good luck.

KINDS OF BIRDS

1. Bald-headed Eagle. White head and white tail. Parent to speckled eagle.
2. Speckled Eagle.
3. Spotted-barred tail. Body is black.
4. White tail with black tip. Known as the calumet eagle.
5. "Half of each feather good, half bad."
6. "Black but has white tails"; head is white; is a hawk.
7. I'pamasina.
8. Chicken hawk. Tails barred black and light brown.
9. Goose.
10. One of the smaller geese.

The twelve sticks on the altar represent the twelve tail feathers but also represent the ten birds listed above.

When in the pit one must not smoke. When you get in, even up the grass and while you are away from the pit hide the poles put on top to keep grass from blowing.

When tying the bait, be sure to put it close enough so that you can reach the bird. You will get a wooden pin from the leader to stick into the wall for the snare to hang onto. When catching an eagle, grab one foot first; then the bird will pull away from the pit; get a hold of the other foot and hold both feet with one hand; then fold its wings over and choke it with the snare.

The second day in camp was usually spent digging new pits or cleaning out those previously used. The walls of old pits were often broken in. Care was taken to remove all the earth in baskets or robes to a place where the birds would not see it or the people walk on it.[32] The pits should be deep enough for the trapper to sit upright in but not quite long enough to stretch out full length in. Most trappers had their pits on the tops of hills near the northwest edge, but it was believed that the best pits were those on the northwest slope, about three rods from the top of the hill, so situated that there was an open view for many miles westward. Birds approaching from that direction while still flying high in the air could see the bait.

In alighting, they would fly beyond the summit of the hill and turn back to light, facing into the west wind. It was difficult to find a good natural location. Should the pit be too near the rim, the birds lit too far back and were likely to sense danger while walking up to the bait. On the other hand, pits located too far

32. This was done because the pit was sacred.

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223 from the rim were undesirable because birds flew past the bait before seeing it and frequently did not come down. Certain pits were known to be better than others because of their proper location in respect to the contour of the hill and because of an unobstructed view westward for many miles.

223 425 829 Even in localities visited annually, ancient pits were discovered from time to time. Anyone finding an old pit, if within reasonable distance of a trapping camp, could appropriate it for his use, in which case it became the property of the leader under whom the trapper served. It was not necessary to perform the rites at the pit when reopening the pit, as it was assumed that such rites had been performed originally when the pit was dug. It was both Mandan and Hidatsa belief that all tribes trapping eagles had similar rites. During this study, in an effort to learn the extent of knowledge concerning eagle-trapping by neighboring tribes with whom these two tribes were in constant contacts, Crows Heart was asked if he knew whether the Assiniboine, Cheyenne, and Sioux had ceremonies associated with eagle-trapping. His reply was that he was positive that they did and that both the rites and songs were the same as for his people. When inquiry was made relative to the source of his information whether from attending their trapping expeditions or from information supplied by Indians of these various tribes, his reply was that he had never been out with Indians of any tribe other than the Mandan and Hidatsa, neither had he discussed the matter with Indians of neighboring tribes, but that "it was common sense that they used the same ceremonies, as all eagle-trapping came from the Black Bears, otherwise these neighboring tribes would never have caught eagles." He then added, "If the ceremonies had been omitted, or improperly conducted, the Indians not only would never have caught eagles but other bad luck would have befallen them." This example illustrates the unreliability of information secured from an informant relative to a society of which he is not a part.

223 Whenever advice was needed, the trapper consulted the leader and paid him for his services. The leader usually supervised construction of the cover for the pit. Six poles were crossed and tied as illustrated in Figure 30. This framework was called the "buffalo's backbone." To these poles were tied buckbrush and

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long grass, while short grass such as grew around the pit was scattered over the cover so as to destroy all evidence of the pit[33] (Fig. 36). 223

Various baits were used. The most popular bait was a stuffed jackrabbit skin. The animal was skinned with the head left on,

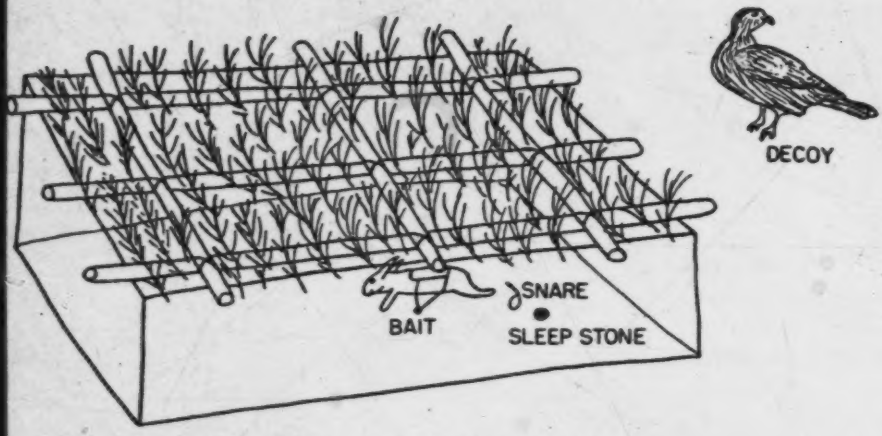

FIG. 30.—Plan of eagle-trapping pit

and the hide was stuffed with grass, sage leaves, or buffalo hair so as to resemble a live rabbit. Some hunters used a coyote skin

33. From my observations when on one of these expeditions, unusual precautions were taken, when preparing the pits, that none of the rules was violated. Bear on the Flat often referred to instances when the trapper had been carried away to find himself in a strange country. Snakes were known to come into the pits, and there was always the possibility that wild animals would come that way and fall onto the trapper. When preparing my pit, Bear on the Flat sang the song to the pit and asked the pit not to send me bad luck. The earth was carried to the east and scattered so that birds flying in from the west would not see it. Bear on the Flat asked the Holy Women for wood for the cover which was ash. Before cutting the buckbrush, he approached the brush with a sage, making motions of driving away the spirits. The buckbrush was tied to the framework. I was treated with a very unpleasant surprise when the frame was ready for the grass covering. I was directed to a low plain about five hundred feet below to secure the grass, although there was an abundance of the same plants on the hill where the pit was located. Putting the grass into place on the covering to conceal the pit without destroying the trapper's view of the sky was the finest piece of camouflaging I have ever observed. First he placed a fine carpet of grass over the buckbrush. Then he would take a few grass stems at a time and cast them like darts into the mat so that they stood up like uncut grass until the entire mat was covered. When he had finished, I observed that the grass on the cover waved with the grass surrounding the pit. The pit was so well concealed that a stake was driven into the ground to mark the northwest corner. One entered the pit by lifting a corner and sliding in feet first. Except for the obstruction by the ash poles, the sky was plainly visible as well as any birds within the angle of vision.

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FIG. 31.—Vacated lodge with closed door

FIG. 32.—Lodge when repaired and ready for occupation.

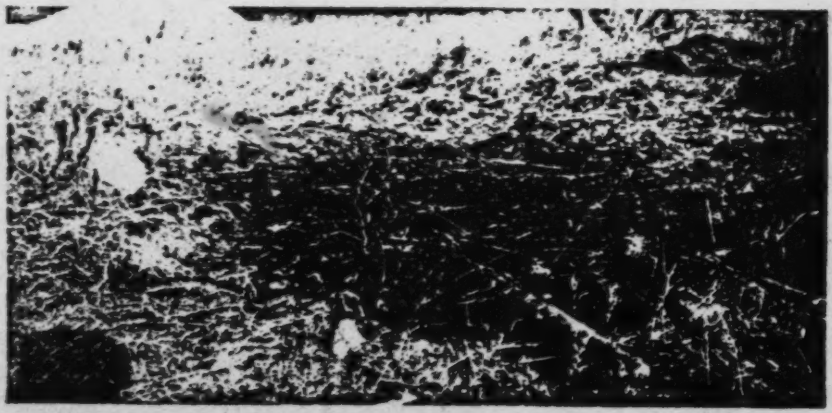

FIG. 33.—Pit with framework and buckbrush covering completed

[Ceremonial lodge used during eagle trapping expedition — Analyst.]

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223 or a foxskin. When trapping in the lake region east of the Missouri either a stuffed duck or goose was used. When a suitable bait was difficult to secure, the head and neck of an antelope were used. Usually the bait was secured while the party was traveling to the trapping grounds. When a stuffed skin was used, a piece of raw meat was tied to it. Some picketed a live eagle near the pit when one was available, if luck was unusually bad. There was a song to the bait which the leader used when "tying the bait," as well as a prescribed method of carrying it to and from the pit.

796 223 785 [787] Torture of the trappers, by one of several techniques, occurred regularly, and there was a prescribed ritual for the person offering himself. It was believed that someone should "suffer for the birds" if the expedition were to be successful. The Mandan felt, after uniting with the Hidatsa at Like-a-Fishhook Village, that visions were difficult to secure in the village ceremonies because there were too many ill-informed people, particularly women, who violated the customs. Crows Heart frequently stated that torture in the Okipa ceremony was less frequently practiced and that he preferred to seek a vision away from the village. Usually a young man would decide beforehand to seek a vision while away from the village trapping eagles, the type of torture being recommended by an older clan brother. The Chief of the Hunter's duty was to pierce the flesh and insert the thongs, except that, when he stood in a joking relationship with the vision-seeker, he could not serve, and another was selected, usually his assistant. Some trappers pulled buffalo skulls through camp by means of thongs fastened through the skin of the back. Crows Heart once hung over a cliff by means of thongs through the skin of the chest. Bears Arm hung from a tree. Sometimes the vision-seeker had no preference, and the leader suggested that he bring wood into camp. In such instances, wood was tied up into twelve bundles,[34] to which lariats were fastened, and dragged to camp by means of thongs through the flesh to which the lariats were tied. All the wood was dragged into camp without help from others, the sufferer even removing his moccasins to make the pain more severe. Tortur-

34. Each bundle represented one of the eagle's tail feathers.

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FIG. 34.—Pit when covered and Bear on Flat

FIG. 35.—Bear on Flat, Crows Heart, and the writer at eagle-trapping site

FIG. 36.—View of territory where eagle-trapping sites were situated

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ing of trappers was performed the evening that the pits were completed.

Ordinarily when a party was composed of advanced middle-aged men, none were tortured, except on occasions when the birds would not stop, or when the winds continued from the wrong direction, there would be fasters on the hills crying during the night. If bad luck continued, then some would offer their bodies for torture and even cut off a piece of finger as an offering to the birds. In historic times there seems to have been somewhat more emphasis of the torture feature when eagle-trapping by the Mandan than the Hidatsa. Since we know from historic accounts[35] that the torture feature was highly developed with the Mandan, it appears that there occurred a transfer from village to nonvillage rites, the latter taking place when on hunting, eagle-trapping, and war expeditions.

Someone was selected, generally one of the waiters, to go out before daylight to determine the direction of the wind. The wind must be from a westerly direction, or it was believed that the birds were not traveling. Crows Heart explained that the calumet eagles nested in the Rocky Mountains and that the pits were located along the migration route to their wintering grounds to the southeast.[36] A piece of soft hide tied to the top of a pole placed on a high hill within view of the camp was employed to indicate the direction of the wind. If favorable winds were blowing, the leader was notified. He ordered all the trappers to prepare for trapping. None was allowed to eat before going out to the pits, as trapping was considered a form of ceremonial "suffering for the birds." Each trapper left shortly after daybreak for his pit, carrying his bait, a ceremonial fiber snare painted red with a piece of Black Medicine attached to it, and several leather snares. The bait was tied to two stakes driven into the ground four inches from the west edge of the pit. A shallow

35. See Maximilian, Prince of Wied, *Travels in the Interior of North America, 1832–1834*, in *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites, XXIII (Cleveland, 1906), 331–33, 377–78; cf. George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, I (Philadelphia, 1857), 265–75.

36. Benson explained that the southland was the meeting place in winter of many creatures considered holy. Among these he included the thunderbirds, eagles, hawks, ducks, geese, cranes, herons, as well as the spirits of the corn and other garden products. This meeting place was an island where Old Woman Who Never Dies lived in her large earth lodge with four large snakes living in the water surrounding her island as her helpers.

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223 ditch wide enough to permit the trapper to reach out his right hand was then dug to the bait. A short stick was kept in the pit to punch away hawks and magpies. The trapper sat down in the pit and fitted the cover into place. The fiber snare was hung on a peg pressed into the west wall, and the "sleep stone," a small stone about three inches in diameter, was set on the east wall.[37]

When eagles flying by saw the bait, they usually circled around the hill a few times before coming down to light a short distance from the bait and walk up to it. Rarely did birds light directly on the bait. As soon as the bird reached the bait, the trapper thrust out his right hand, seized the leg, and pulled the bird down toward the ground. Ben Benson, who owned full trapping rights, said that he always gave his trappers this instruction:

> When the eagle comes to the bait, it will be so close that you can see it through the grass covering over the pit. Use your right hand and catch the leg closest to you. Pull the bird down toward the ground, not toward you. Put out the left hand and get the other leg. Hold both legs with the left hand and put the right hand out and swing one wing over against the other. Hold both wings together at the tips, and the bird can't hurt you. Tie the feet together then. Eagles are strong and fierce. They can stick their claws through your hand, pick your face, or cut your face with their wings. Don't catch bald-headed eagles; they are fierce and will fight.

Live eagles, when used as decoys, were staked down at the southeast corner of the pit. Benson never allowed more to be kept alive than the number of trappers. Some leaders required the trappers to kill their birds as soon as they were caught. Decoys were carried to the pits while trapping; other times they were kept in the bird shelter on the west side of the ceremonial lodge. Whenever an eagle flew by the pit, the decoys whistled, attracting the other bird's attention to the bait and warning the man in the pit.

796 223 Ceremonial crying when approaching the lodge with an eagle was practiced by all leaders. If the bird caught was a young black-tipped bird, crying continued all the way to the door of the lodge. Crying stopped when about one hundred and fifty paces from the lodges if a spotted golden eagle, the parent of a black tip, was being brought to camp. For a white-headed

37. When excavating an old pit for Crows Heart in 1932, we found a stone near the south wall, and a perforated clam shell used for paint was on a shelf dug in the east wall.

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eagle, crying stopped at a considerable distance from camp. The bird was taken in at the left side of the lodge. Women around camp went into their lodges and covered their heads while birds were being brought into camp.

The leader did not have a trap but stayed around camp while the trappers were out in order to be ready to receive the birds as they were brought in by the men at sunset. When crying continued until the lodge was reached, the leader knew that a young calumet eagle had been caught. Coals were placed near the front right post, and sage was burned there as incense for the snare and other sacred objects.

A song was addressed to the snare, announcing to it that it had caught something. A second song[38] addressed to the people by Black Bear referred to the sacredness of the birds in the opinion of the people, a belief not shared by the bears. A third song referred to the coming feast when the bird was to be eaten.

The trapper announced the kind of bird, after which it was pushed violently through the left side of the doorway, moving the hide-door covering sufficiently to get the bird through. The twelve tail feathers which had been removed beforehand were tied together and placed on the bird's back as it was taken in the lodge, part way to the altar, and thrown violently at the snare on the altar. The leader produced a corn ball from which a small piece was broken and rubbed on the bird's beak saying, "Acira[39] feeds you." The ceremonial pipe was produced, and the bird's beak was touched with the pipe as an offering to the bird.

When the first eagle was brought in, Iron Eyes extracted five white down feathers from his bundle; two were offered to the snake poles, one to the sun snare, one to the moon snare, and one to the buffalo skull. The leader directed the successful trapper to carry his bird to the back of the lodge, as the lodge was too sacred even for so sacred a creature as an eagle.

The trappers returned to the ceremonial lodge at sunset carrying their baits on their back. As soon as a trapper came into the lodge, the waiter gave him food which had been brought

38. When the bears instructed Black Wolf in the art of eagle-trapping, they explained that the people considered the eagles sacred, but not so with the bears, who considered them their favorite food.

39. Some bundles had a bear's foot, in which case the leader said, "Footbone feeds you."

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over from the women's camp. Afterward the trapper smoked. Each trapper, after eating, discussed happenings at the pit, and, from the information thus supplied, the leader offered suggestions for increasing the catch. When birds circled the bait but would not come down, it was suggested that raw meat be used. Sometimes the birds flew by without appearing to see the bait, and decoys were recommended.

The leader did not have a pit for his own use but remained in camp. However, if the wind was from the wrong direction in the morning and the men were out hunting game, he could go into any of the pits should the wind change to the west.

Evenings were spent in storytelling. The leader would acquaint the trappers with the myths associated with eagle-trapping. There were many of these myths, and a good leader would be able to consume every evening for the usual four weeks in camp without exhausting his stock. Each was related in great detail with endless repetitions. Some of the longer myths consumed four nights in telling; others were short and could be related in one night. All were expected to listen attentively while seated on a buffalo robe. Those who nodded were pinched with the bird stick. An example of the stories told is given in the Appendix.

The position of women in eagle-trapping ceremonies varied among bundle-owners. (1) Most bundle-owners prohibited women from entering the ceremonial lodge or looking inside. (2) Several bundle-owners had special rites to which women were invited when birds had been caught. (3) A few bundle-owners required a menstruating woman to come into the lodge and breathe the smoke from sage burned at the four corners of the fire pit.

Unless special rites relative to the women were purchased, they were required to stay away from the ceremonial lodge and its vicinity. The right to bring women into the lodge was a separate purchase not essential to trapping eagles. There were separate songs and a myth, giving the right to call in a menstruating woman, which could be purchased. It referred to the capture of the leader of the eagles who, in return for having her life spared, promised unusual success if her song was sung when a menstruating woman was brought into the lodge. The consensus of both

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Mandan and Hidatsa informants was that women took a more prominent place in Mandan than in Hidatsa ceremonies and that bringing women into the lodges was a Mandan rite that some Hidatsa bought. This native belief is borne out by a woman's right to perform the Okipa ceremony with her brother's assistance and to own bundles of deceased relatives until a successor had qualified.

In the selection of eagle-trapping territory, consideration was given to the suitability of the region for hunting. Some informants thought that not more than one-third of the days were suitable for catching eagles. When the winds were not from a westerly direction, the party went out hunting and received their orders from the Chief of the Hunters, whose place in the ceremonial lodge was near the head of the lodge on the left side and opposite the leader.

The office of Chief of the Hunters was filled by the leader when selecting the places for the men when first entering the lodge. In mythological times, Two Men[40] discovered Black Bear's cub carrying a clay pot in which he cooked his food mysteriously, and, resolving to live leisurely thereafter, they stole the vessel. The cub chased them into Dog Den Butte and captured them with his snare. Cub contemplated killing them, but they agreed to do the hunting[41] for the eagle-trappers if their lives were spared. In time they acquired the position of leaders of the hunters.

The eagle-trapping territory was distantly removed from the summer villages in a region not occupied permanently by any tribe.[42] Except for sites on the east side of the Missouri River, the territory was deeply eroded with isolated wooded areas along, and adjacent to, the principal streams. The badlands region along the Little Missouri River and its tributaries was a favorite habitat of the elk, black-tail deer, and mountain sheep. White-tail deer remained more or less in the wooded bottom lands of streams, while buffalo and antelope ranged in herds and bands on the high grass plains a few miles from the principal streams.

40. See my manuscript on "Hidatsa Social and Ceremonial Organization" for an account of the exploits of these two characters.

41. Their medicine was the arrow.

42. See map of eagle-trapping camps (Fig. 28).

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Eagle-trapping expeditions were organized for a dual purpose, namely, the securing of feathers and of a winter's supply of meat and hides. Crows Heart thought that, taken year after year, the meat and hides secured had greater worth than the feathers. As he explained, it was not unusual to return without feathers, but game was always abundant once one reached territory not ordinarily hunted in. He remarked, on many occasions, that a village as a unit would never go to rough country on a summer hunt, as there would be few buffaloes there, and it would be difficult to surround them because of the uneven topography. There was the further danger of ambush. The rough lands were hunted over by small bands, chiefly eagle-trappers and war parties.

The appearance of ice on the edges of streams was the signal for the eagle-trapping expedition to return to the village. Before horses became numerous in the villages, it was customary to travel overland to the trapping sites, where bullboats were made of buffalo and elk hides for floating back the meat and hides to the village. In order not to be caught along the way by a sudden freezing of the river, it was imperative that trapping cease immediately with the first appearance of cold weather.

While in the trapping camp, the women received the meat and hides brought in by the men. The meat was cured on scaffolds, and the hides were dried or made into bullboats. Special effort was made to secure mountain sheep, as the badlands were the habitat of these prized animals, used for men's shirts and women's dresses, since their skins tanned softer than any other hide. Bears Arm, in explaining the importance of the meat and hides secured on these expeditions, stated that single women tried to marry young men so they could go along to help cure the meat and hides, knowing they might marry one so lucky as to kill a white buffalo.

Mandan tradition appears devoid of reference to recent division of a village population into small eagle-trapping bands during the winter. Such is not the case with the Hidatsa, however. In the Earthnaming ceremony of the Hidatsa there is reference in the myth to the division of the village into small bands camped along the Little Missouri River in eagle-trapping lodges during the winter. At least two of the clans, the Maxoxati and

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AwaxEnawita, trace their origin to these small winter camps. Bears Arm explained that, in former times, the women's lodges were the same as the men's and that, on termination of the trapping season, the altar was removed and the bundle closed, after which the lodge was no longer considered sacred. The leader's wife and family came to his lodge, and the other trappers returned to their wives' lodges for the winter. Before the spring thaw, the various bands returned to the summer village to prepare for the planting of gardens. If this fall and winter division of the Hidatsa villages into bands was customary, as mentioned in tradition and mythology, the custom had been superseded by the winter village system by the opening of the historic period on the Upper Missouri River. By this time each summer village, which we have come to call the permanent village, had its corresponding winter village. The summer village was situated on one of the upper, grassy terraces adjacent to the Missouri River, with the winter village situated in heavy timber on the river bottom. The entire population of a summer village would move to its selected site, and there would be a winter chief selected each year.

There is no reference in the mythology to the breaking-up of the Mandan summer village into winter bands, but each village might build a winter camp to avoid the tedious task of bringing wood a considerable distance to the village. After a few years, all available wood near a summer village would be exhausted, except for driftwood in the river. From all available data, there is no evidence that the Mandan selected new chiefs for the winter period.

We may conclude that the Hidatsa practice of naming a winter chief grew out of the custom of breaking up into eagle-trapping bands under a leader in the fall, his authority continuing after the closing of trapping until the return of the party to the summer village. Wolf Chief explained that this could be done formerly, as there were fewer enemies, but that it was inexpedient in later years, as it was necessary to defend the villages the year round. It is possible, however, that the Mandan abandoned this custom somewhat earlier because of greater pressure from enemies.

A brief ritual closed the eagle-trapping period. It was essen-

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223 796 A brief ritual closed the eagle-trapping period. It was essentially the same for all bundle-owners. Ben Benson's ritual, which he received of Iron Eyes, was explained as follows.

BEN BENSON'S NARRATIVE OF CLOSING RITES

When ice began to form along the edges of small creeks, the men knew that it was time to stop trapping eagles. Usually three to eight weeks were spent trapping. The leader was in full charge of the expedition, and no one knew when he would order the trapping stopped. Early on the day trapping was to stop, the leader would kindle the fire and say, "Get up. There is a big flood coming." This meant that they must stop trapping, for when the flood comes there is no changing its course. Those who had never been out before did not know the meaning, but the old trappers knew that the time had come to return home.

After eating, the leader would say, "It is time now to kill all your live eagles. Kill them with Rope-in-Wood Snare. Carry all your eagles over the hill [he then designated the place] and put them in a row. Then you should make an offering of calico[43] to them."

By the time this had been done and the trappers had returned to camp, the leader had his eagle-trapping bundle closed and the women had their tepees down, ready to break camp.

One of the party, usually the man with the best war record, was sent out by the leader "to see if there are any enemies in the neighborhood." He went to the place where the dead eagles were lined up and returned in a hurry to report that there were a certain number of enemies just beyond the hill. [The number reported corresponded with the dead birds counted.] The trappers prepared for battle, painted their faces, dressed lightly, and put their hair up in a ball on top of their heads where it would not cover their eyes. Each trapper sang his personal sacred song and wore some article from his sacred bundle. At a signal from the leader, all charged the "enemies," shooting and calling as they ran. Each seized a bird and cut off the wings and five body feathers, running back to camp as quickly as possible.

The party moved away from camp immediately and stopped to make camp again after traveling a mile or more. The young men built a sweat lodge under the leader's direction, while the women prepared food. The sweat-lodge entrance was to the south. The trappers placed the wing and tail feathers they had secured on the west side of the fireplace, while the leader stood at the entrance to the sweat lodge with his eagle-trapping bundle on one side and a bundle of sage on the other.

223 796 533 The leader began by chanting four wordless songs and then, half-singing, half-talking, he addressed the eagles in these words:

> Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
> Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
> Go; walk; go in the right direction;
> Go; walk; go in the right direction;
> Go to Birds Bill Butte;[44] there you will find antelope meat;
> Go to Birds Bill Butte; there you will find antelope meat.

43. In early times a strip of soft tanned elkhide was used.

44. Birds Bill Butte, better known today as Eagle Nose Butte, is a high promontory south of Mandan, North Dakota.

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Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go across the divide;[45] there you will find blacktail deer meat;
Go across the divide; there you will find blacktail deer meat.

Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go to Grape River;[46] there you will find elk meat;
Go to Grape River; there you will find elk meat.

Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go to the Big Bend;[47] there you will find buffalo meat;
Go to the Big Bend; there you will find buffalo meat.
Now you are home.[48]

When this song was ended, the spirits of the eagles left to join their people in the meeting place of the spirits near a large body of water. Only the leaders could send the spirits away. Men without eagle-trapping rights were afraid to catch eagles for fear that the spirits, being unsent, might bring bad luck to the trappers. All who caught eagles gave the leader pay in feathers, calicoes, robes, or knives for singing these songs and sending the birds' spirits away.

Then the leader sang the cleansing song, rubbing all the feathers with the sage. He rubbed each person in the party to cleanse him and bring him back to a human being again. While trapping, the men were impersonating the small bears. My father gave each trapper a new name connected with the bears for the duration of trapping. Mandan generally had this change of names. If a trapper stumbled when out trapping, he would report it and get another name, otherwise he would have bad luck. Each man paid the leader for his name, but it was relinquished when the cleansing ceremony ended.

The leader and as many as wished went into the sweat lodge, where the trappers hung the feathers on the sides in imitation of the bear's lodge far to the north. The sweat-lodge rites completed the ceremonies, after which the families united again either to return home at once or to hunt along the way according to their inclinations.

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Benson claimed to be the fourteenth owner of the bundle which he used. In order of succession from Black Wolf, the owners were reported as follows: (1) Black Wolf; (2) Bull Leg;

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45. The Mandan called that section of the country between the Cannonball and Grand rivers "The Divide." The blacktail deer meat was believed to be on a high hill at the mouth of the Grand River and on the north bank.

46. The Little Bend of the Missouri River is at the mouth of the Cheyenne River, called by the Mandan Grape River.

47. The Big Bend of the Missouri is below Pierre, South Dakota.

48. The Mandan believed that the Missouri River entered the ocean not far below the Big Bend. This was believed to be the winter home of migratory waterfowl, corn, and the large birds of the eagle family (see chap. ix).

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(3) Round Clouds; (4) White around the Arms; (5) Fills His Lodge; (6) White Finger Nails; (7) Blind; (8) Berdache; (9–10) not able to recall their names; (11) White Finger Nails, WaxikEna clan; (12) Arrowhead Earrings, WaxikEna clan; (13) Iron Eyes, WaxikEna clan; and (14) Ben Benson, Tamisik clan.

Two accounts of eagle-trapping by Bears Arm were recorded in their entirety, without interruption by the writer, in order to determine what the informant considered the essentials of trapping. These are to be found in the Appendix. It was evident after this study had continued some time that special emphasis was given to certain aspects of a ceremony while other sections of the ritual received little attention. In the two eagle-trapping accounts it will be noted that Bears Arm emphasized these points: (1) the leader and persons attending; (2) the preparation of the ceremonial lodge, pits, and baits; (3) the seating arrangement and officers; (4) the differences in ritual between bundle-owners; (5) the number of birds caught and the names of the successful trappers; (6) the torturing of the trappers; and (7) the final cleansing rites.

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Chapter VIII

CATFISH-TRAPPING CEREMONY

THIS ceremony was associated with the eagle-trapping bundle, and both possessed a common mythological origin from Black Wolf. There was no direct reference to the fish trap in the Black Wolf myth, but in theory the sacred snare could catch anything. Crows Heart explained that even a buffalo corral was in reality a large snare, so a man owning a sacred snare was selected to stand on a high hill and by means of motions, as of snaring the buffaloes, pulled the animals by its magical powers into the corral.[1] War leaders took their sacred snares along when looking for enemies for supernatural aid in ensnaring and destroying their foes.

Purchase of catfish- and eagle-trapping rites could be made simultaneously, or the fish-trapping rights could be bought at a later date. Some men bought rights in only one of the ceremonies. A seller possessing rights in both ceremonies could sell each ceremony four times. Associated closely with these two ceremonies were the sweat lodge and the snare rites for doctoring and officiating at the buffalo and antelope pounds.

Although the Missouri River carries considerable sediment, catfish are very abundant. The presence of catfish bones in ancient Mandan and Hidatsa villages indicates that considerable use was made of these fish as food.

When a fish trap was in use, the black-bear hide was kept in the owner's lodge, laid out on calicoes on a four-post standard with its head pointing toward the fireplace. Food was offered to the bundle each day while the fish trap was being used.

Ben Benson remembered these Mandan who had catfish-trapping rights about 1880:

1. Black Tongue (Big Turtle). He was also custodian of the Okipa turtle drums, Hoita in the Okipa, owner of an Eagle-trapping bundle, and a singer in the Corn ceremonies.

1. Refer to my manuscript, "Hidatsa Social and Ceremonial Organization," for an account of the ceremonies associated with the buffalo corral.

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Appendix IV

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON EAGLE-TRAPPING

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Evenings were spent in storytelling. The leader would acquaint the trappers with the myths associated with eagle-trapping. There were many of these myths, and a good leader would be able to consume every evening for the usual four weeks in camp without exhausting his stock. Each was related in great detail with endless repetitions. Some of the longer myths consumed four nights in telling; others were short and could be related in one night. All were expected to listen attentively while seated on a buffalo robe. Those who nodded were pinched with the bird stick. An example of the stories told is given below.

MYTH OF BROWN OLD MAN RELATED BY WOLF CHIEF[1]

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There are two ways of telling this story; one is that he came from the heavens and the other that he came from the earth through being born of a woman. I heard many stories, when nineteen years of age from Small Ankles, my father, and Chief,[2] my father-in-law, in the winter village at Blue Buttes above here. Even the older people would have them come out and tell the story to them and put on a feast to them.

Brown Old Man came to the village and always knew himself that he was not a real human, but he would stay with them. When they needed meat, he would call the buffaloes. If they needed rain, he would call it. The people did not know, and he never told them, who he was. After he had been with the people a while, he thought that he would marry. In the spring the buffalo hides get brown, and he had one of those brown hides for a robe until they came to call him Brown Old Man. Sometimes the people would invite him in and feed him well. Then he would say that this man will strike an enemy; sometimes he would say two or more, and it would always come true. Still the people of the village did not know who he was at heart. At last the people began to realize that he was trying to be a holy man, and they would say, "If he were a real medicine man, he would have a good living with more to show for his powers." He felt bad when he heard it but would say, "I am a man who saves the people here." At last he was getting old and white, and his wife was old and white too.

There was one man in the village who invited in Brown Old Man often, and, when he went out to fast, he dreamed of Brown Old Man. He saw in his dream this Brown Old Man painted all over so that he looked more like a

1. For another relation of this myth by Wolf Chief see Gilbert Livingston Wilson, *Hidatsa Eagle Trapping* ("Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History," Vol. XXX, Part IV [1929]), pp. 187–94. There is also a very brief version in Martha Warren Beckwith, *Mandan-Hidatsa Myths and Ceremonies* ("Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society," Vol. XXXII [1938]), pp. 204–5.

2. Chief was a Mandan of the Prairie Chicken clan.

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The other said, "I had that happen, too, when you were winning, so I don't think it is anything serious. If you find anything more to bet on, I am ready. I always give a person a chance to get back what he lost." 773 539

After a while Snake Man stepped out. Late that night Brown Old Man came and ate with the young man, and they were happy. He told Brown Old Man what Snake Man had said and then Brown Old Man laughed.

He said, "I made one mistake here; at the time you fellows ran I was angry, and I thought that every time Snake Man breathed the dirt would go into his mouth. That is why he threw all that dirt up. That was a mistake, for I am afraid that he will not have a long life."

While the gambling was going on, the young man had married. He told his wife to go out and take a bath, for he had promised Brown Old Man that if he won the game and had a wife he should take her as a daughter-in-law. Brown Old Man had said, "I will sleep beside her and take her as my daughter-in-law, but I will not touch her. What you have done, giving her to me for my daughter-in-law, makes me happy." They slept together until the next day. The young man and his "father," Brown Old Man, ate together and were happy. Brown Old Man said to his "son," "I sang a holy song while you were playing the game, and it is yours. In the future when you go out to attack your enemy, use that song, and you will win that game too."

Meanwhile Snake Man was vomiting up the dirt; it was not long after that until he died.

Brown Old Man died in that village, but, when they tell the story, the old people do not say whether he went back to the birds or not, but it seems from the earlier part of the story that he must have.

BEARS ARM'S NARRATIVE OF EAGLE-TRAPPING. I

The people were living out on the Reservation by this time [1888]. I was about twenty-four years old then. By that time we had wagons so we went with teams. We went across from Independence and set out west toward Heart Singer Butte, near which we camped that night. The next time we moved, we camped at Eagle Nest Butte. Bad Coat had his wife, True Woman (Water-buster clan); Iron Eyes had his wife, Brown Chest (AwaxEnawita clan); Charging had his wife, Robe (Knife clan); Little Crow had his wife, Otter (Water-buster clan); Packs Wolf had his wife, Comes Along Pink (AwaxEnawita clan); Spotted Weasel had his wife, Cedar (AwaxEnawita clan); Raven Knows Nothing had his wife, Bear Woman (Knife clan); Sitting Owl had his wife, Pink Blossom (AwaxEnawita clan); Sitting Owl had an adopted son along called Standing Bull. 223

The next time we camped just the other side of where the White Lodge stands, where there are large springs. The next day we came opposite Buffalo Manure Butte, called Lone Butte today, and camped on the banks of the Little Missouri River. We crossed the Little Missouri there and followed Buffalo Manure Creek, called Crosby Creek today, and crossed the divide to the west and camped. The camp was on the Little Missouri River in the timber.

We set to work, for we had wagons then, cutting the timbers and posts. They were mostly ash, and we hauled them on the wagons. We set up the four posts with the rails at the top and then carried the timbers around the sides of the place where the lodge was to stand. All the men worked on this, and we finally finished it. It took us one day to cut the timbers while others were scraping the ground down, taking the roots out. The next day we commenced 223 346

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

putting the lodge up, finishing the actual building in one day. The next day the leader put the wood pillows on the ground, dug out the fireplace, and placed the stakes at the head of the lodge where the buffalo head belonged. He finished everything up just as in the other drawings I made. After the skull was brought in by the leader, it was placed at the head of the lodge. Then we went out and cut soft grass for bedding. Iron Eyes was the man to stay in the lodge and burn incense, for he was an old man and did not go into any of the pits.

Each one of us went out and selected a spot where our pits should be; sometimes two would go together and make one pit. When finished, they would go to another site and make another pit for the other one. That took us two days. Where one had a pit close to a washout or bank, he would carry the dirt and throw it in there. Those on the level would carry the dirt far off and put it in a low pile to make it look as though a ground mole or pocket gopher had dug it up. After a pit was dug, we took the measurements of it for the cover and cut the six sticks for the frame. Buckbrush was tied between the pole frames to make a shield for the grass which was to come next.

The bait's place was at the west side. There were two stakes to hold it down with a crotch on the end of each. Stakes were driven into the ground, and the bait was tied to the two stakes to keep it from being moved by the birds. There was a stake on the inside of the pit in the wall also. The third stake had a crotch, and a strong cord was tied to it and to the bait so that the eagle could not move the bait.

As soon as all the stakes were tied together, to get into the pit, we would take the cover up and drop our things in under it and crawl in feet first. Before going in, the bait was fixed from the outside and the cord dropped down into the pit to be tied to the stake. Then we smoothed the grass covering. We always used six poles for the cover; that way it made the covering strong enough to hold a bird's weight. Some trappers often reported that birds came and fought the decoy if it was too close to the bait, so I always had mine farther off. That was why I never had any trouble catching birds.

When we had the lodge completed, the leader told us we could go in. We took our firearms up and stood in front of the lodge. The Leader said, "Sitting Owl, you will go in and be the Crack Shot (*mariisakihE*)."[8] He did not know that he would be selected. In fact, none of us knew who would be selected for the different places. Then Charging was told to go in, then Raven Knows Nothing, Bears Arm, and Spotted Weasel, who was selected as the waiter on that side. Then, on the other side Packs Wolf was selected waiter (*ix'-ta-ki*). Blue Stone, Little Crow, Iron Eyes, and Bad Coat went in last.

Each man beginning with the Crack Shot had four sticks, each one representing one of the four eagles, making in all twenty sticks on one side and twenty sticks on the other side. There were no markings on them; they were cut from chokecherry branches. When Wolfs Eyes went out, he had no sticks in front at all. Old Bear also gave each man four sticks which were placed in a row at the altar.

I never knew of offering strips of beaver hides to the stakes, as Crows Heart says, but it may have been in some of the other men's rites. I was out with Old Black Bear, and he was doing a little differently, but White Eagle came and asked me to go home as my folks wanted me. The leader thought

8. Hidatsa language.

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

I ought to go back, so I came away. In that trapping, I understood that there were some rules that were somewhat different. If a trapper coming home from his pit stumbles and falls, when he comes back into the lodge, he has to tell it; when he does so, a new name was given him for the time of the trapping. He also changed all their names during the time of trapping and gave them names about bears or eagles. He sold his rights to Stephen Bird, who is still living.

When everything was completed, the leader burned incense and offered smoke to the buffalo skull and offered sacrifices of calicoes to the skull. That is what we called "Blessing the Lodge." Then we went to our pits. Sitting Owl caught two white tails with black tips. In the evening we went into the lodge. The leader produced a piece of corn ball and called the Crack Shot, who, instead of crawling on his elbow and knees, stooped over and walked to the leader. He received the corn ball, and the leader said, "The Footbone is giving you this corn ball."

The Crack Shot took it and tasted it, saying "Footbone, the bottom of your foot is delicious and sweet." Each one when he came up to the leader in turn said the same thing. Each person had a piece of corn ball in front of him, and the tail feathers of the eagles were given to Crack Shot. He received them and touched the corn ball with them and passed them around until the feathers reached the leader again.

When the leader received the feathers, he again got up and went over to the buffalo skull, saying, "Old Man with Ears Backwards,[9] here are your tail feathers, but they are not yours. Your children wish you to keep these feathers."

Then the waiter went out and called, asking the women to come over to the lodge. All the women came over and sat down close to the entrance. The leader painted himself with red paint on his forehead, cheeks, hands, wrists, and the top of his head. He had a feather back of his head. He represented the Old Black Bear. His rattles were the bear's feet tied together with a long string. When the women came in, the leader and those who were sitting with him sang. The women sang with the men, and Iron Eyes'[10] wife had a little bear's skin on her lap. It was the bear that had been at the altar. When the women came in, the leader gave it to her to lay on her lap and make it dance. Each one of us took our snares from the little sticks on the altar, opened up the loops, and swung them up and down in time with the leader, who was singing a special song. The women sang, and the woman with the bear's skin made it dance in time with the music. We all enjoyed ourselves singing. At the end of each song, we would hold our cords up and pretend to be roping something.

Then this practice was also different from the others I was out with. Any one of the men could make a game trap by setting up posts with braces as a deadfall. The one who finds a red fox or coyote in the trap takes it out, throwing it to one side, and then takes the skin off for the altar. In case there is a boy old enough in camp, he can go out, take the animal, and bring it in. We had one boy along, but he was too young, so they did not have the trap set. They just sang the song that went with it. When the ceremony was going on, there was one song that we danced to when it came up. There was also a spe-

9. Ceremonial name for the buffalo.

10. He owned a complete Mandan Eagle-trapping bundle.

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

cial song for the waiter in which he danced alone. The leader's waiter on his side was the main waiter, and the other was an assistant. If the main waiter was absent, the assistant did the work. In the evening the women would bring wood into the camp for the sweathouse.

When the wind was in the right direction, we went into the pits. That is what we called the good wind. When the wind is from the southwest or northwest, it was considered good to fair wind, but the west was considered the best. The waiter was the first one to be up and around. He would go out and look at the flag. When he saw that the wind was from the right direction, he would say, "The wind is in the right direction." The men would all get out of bed and go to their pits.

The leader would say, "I will help the waiter if he wants to go into his pit. I will stay and do his work."

When the waiter went out to see the flag and the wind was blowing from the other directions, he would come back and report it to the leader by saying, "Leader, the wind is in the wrong direction."

The leader would say to the men, "When you are through eating, go out and hunt." There was a term that they used. Instead of saying morning meal, he would say, "After you are through sitting on it," meaning that the eagle sits on the bait. That was why he used that term. He would use the words, "Go out and throw stones at animals," meaning to hunt game. When the wind was right, we went to our pits. Raven Knows Nothing caught three good eagles with black tips; then we had another meeting the same as before. The women would come, and we would have a good time. The leader would have the men come to him for their corn balls again.

Another time we went to our pits and Packs Wolf caught two with black tips, and then the leader, himself, caught two. They were black tipped also. Those were all the birds caught.

The night after the catch was made, I asked the Crack Shot (Sitting Owl, Maxoxati clan) to fill up the pipe; he did so and gave it to me. I took the pipe and gave it to the leader, saying, "My leader, take this pipe, for I wish to suffer." He was glad. Beforehand, I had prepared my sticks. I made three of them. The Crack Shot and his helper took me outside close to the lodge by a tree and there they cut my breast on both sides and on the top of my right arm. They fastened the rawhide rope to the sticks, and then I ran around the tree while the ceremony and singing was going on inside the lodge. After all the songs were sung, the same men who tortured me came out and took the rawhide rope off and pulled the sticks out. The sticks were taken in and placed on the altar. Several days after that, Charging was tortured. When I suffered, I had my medicine bundle, the Bear Medicine, that I got from my father, hanging on my right arm. When I suffered, it was like a prayer asking the great spirits to help me to live long in the world, be fortunate in everything I undertook, and have property. I prayed to Black Medicine because Spring Boy and Lodge Boy said that they would turn into that root[11] but that their spirits would go back into the skies and help the people. That was why I prayed to them. The idea of fasting and offering myself this way was so that I might be blessed by the spirits. Then in war I would come out victorious and defeat the enemy.

11. A piece of this root is tied to each snare.

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

I told you of the case where a man fasted in a bear's den, and the bear took a hold of him and threw him to one side. This man dreamed that night that the bear came and blessed him and told him that he would be a successful warrior and a brave man. Afterward a son was born to him; the son was Seven Bears. The Assiniboine came with the intention of destroying our village, but Seven Bears was brave. They shot him with arrows and bullets, but they had no effect on him. His horse was shot, but he got on another and came back. He fought the enemy and ran over them; he struck them so that the enemy turned and ran back. Torturing was a part of our prayers, for, whenever one prays, he should fast. In torturing, one will have a dream of a spirit, and that way he is blessed. By doing these things, some of the men got great power from the spirits. Crows Heart once saw that Old White Man's back was full of scars, and Crows Heart asked him how many times he had suffered. Old White Man could not remember; his skin had been pierced so many times.

The next one to be tortured was Packs Wolf. His suffering was inside of the lodge, where he was fastened to the roof. His feet were off of the ground, and a stick was given to him with which to swing himself. While he was hanging there, the leader sang his songs.

Then several days after that Spotted Weasel whittled four sticks, came back, and made a sweathouse. They ran sticks through his wrist and up to the braces of the sweat lodge, and he was also tortured on the breast. When one is tortured in the sweathouse, the women are not permitted to go into it at any time. The Crack Shot was Sitting Owl, and Spotted Weasel was his son-in-law, so he got another man to act in his place. He asked Raven Knows Nothing to do the torturing. When we went in there, the leader began to pour water on the stones, and we got down low near the ground, but Spotted Weasel could not, being tied up there near the roof. He cried to the spirits; it was a hardship for him to go through, but he did. After that, we went into our pits, but no one caught any more birds, even though we were there over one month.

Now that the sweathouse was made, each one of us got some good dried meat and a whole meat [the large piece stripped off of the length of the animal's back]. We paid the leader, and he took us into the sweat lodge to cleanse all of us. We broke camp and started for home. Bluestone and I, being single, left the others and came ahead.

On the other trips with other men, they would not let the women come into the lodge. I thought that the reason for being unlucky was because they had let the women in.

I heard that Blue Stone's father, Wood Mouth or Medicine Bird, whipped his wife one day when he was a leader and his men did not have any luck in catching the eagles. By doing that their luck changed from bad to good. They caught many eagles. I do not know if some great spirit told him to do that or not, but I do know that they ordinarily did not do that, for men, women, and children were expected to be kindhearted and not have any ill-feeling toward each other.

We did not change pipes but used both red and black stone, depending on the kind the leader had. In early days they did not have the red stone pipes. Then the stone was black, and the pipe was straight without the elbow. The hole was in the end, and the stone fitted in on the inside was called I-go-xE'.

In the ceremony they used a special medicine pipe taken from the bundles.

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

BEARS ARM'S NARRATIVE OF EAGLE-TRAPPING. II

223 Early in fall the leader, Wolfs Eyes, said, "I am going out eagle-trapping." There are two ways of getting up a group; some leaders accept volunteers, or the leader may select his men. We went to him and said. "We wish to go with you," and he said that it would be all right. He told us to take certain products from the garden such as roast corn, dried yellow corn, white flour corn, and dried squash. Some prepared their own baits at home. Most of the baits were stuffed jackrabbit skins. Those who did not have any baits made them after we were located at the eagle-trapping lodge and the tepees had been put up. Some would use a piece of deer hide cut up with ears on and two legs on the side.

In the party were the leader, Wolfs Eyes; Big Walk; Little Crow; Lance Owner; Little Bull; Holding Eagle; Black Bear; SittingWoman; White Body; Bears Arm; Louie Wolf or Red Horse; Many Birds; a boy, Spotted Weasel; Little Crow's wife, Otter Woman, and their daughter, Comes Out; Big Walk's wife, Plain Blossom, and their grandson, Jim Foot or Foot Prints; Plain Blossom's daughter, Too Costly; Woman in Water, wife of Charging Eagle, and her son, Richard Burr; Lance Owner's wife, Yellow Stalk; Holding Eagle's wife, Bobcat Woman. Charging Eagle being a policeman, he could not get away, but his wife, being Bears Arm's mother's sister, went along to help with the work in the camp. Also my mother's mother and Woman in Water were [462] sisters. There were several women along because there was much to do, since in bad weather we would go out and kill mountain sheep, elk, and deer, so the women came along to care for the meet and hides.

484 When everything was ready, the young women took their bullboats to the river and crossed our stuff consisting of tepees, poles, provisions, bedding, 492 and cooking utensils. It took nearly all day to cross the stuff. The first camp was at Beaver Creek. We used tepee poles tied together as travois. The horses pulled poles with the tepees and bedding, while several additional pack horses were loaded down with bedding. We were all on horseback and traveled very slowly. When traveling, the leader was at the head of the party, while the hunters were to the side or in advance of the others.

487 The second day we traveled to End of World Buttes and stopped northeast of Killdeer the third night. After camping on the east side of Killdeer, we went around the north side of the Killdeer Mountains and camped on the north side. From there we went north because that was the best route to cross the Little Missouri River. After we left the Little Missouri, we went to the place called Wolf Pit. When we reached our destination, we commenced to put up our lodge, for there was no lodge there before.

223 The place was selected by the leader because of the presence of a prairie-dog town there in a valley extending from the Yellowstone River eastward to the Little Missouri. All along that valley there were prairie dogs, and the eagles traveled along this valley in order to catch these animals. Then the Indians would come to this site, and our leader thought that it would be a good place to catch the birds.

346 As soon as the camp was selected, all set to work erecting the lodge, even 784 the women helped by cutting the grass to pack between the poles and digging 223 dirt to put over the lodge. There was an opening at the top for the sparks and smoke. There were four posts and railing on top, while the rest of the poles

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

leaned against them. We were not allowed to shoot or throw stones at any kind of birds. Nor were we allowed to sing other than the songs that went with the trapping. The leader tied pieces of calico to ash trees as offering to the Holy Women and told the new members that the region back of the lodge or west was holy ground as the birds came from that direction.

Then we did the "Tied" ceremony, meaning marking the corners of the new pits so that they were square and deep enough to be over one's head when sitting up in them. On the side wall a hole was dug like a small shelf and a stone was put in it. The stone is called Baby Stone, for the eagles were considered sacred. The stone was used as a shield, and, when one catches an eagle and wishes to kill it in the pit, instead of using the words "kill it" we said "put it to sleep" and took the stone down and placed it between the eagles wings, took the cord tied around its neck, and pulled the cord back, and that way broke the neck.

The bears were the first ones to trap eagles; there are two different stories about eagle-trapping. The leader goes in and blesses the lodge and prays to the spirits. When they first learned of eagle-trapping, the bear was doing this. He had a cord and spread it out, opening it, and said, "All are caught." It was because the bears prayed that prayers had to be offered to the spirits to whom the bears prayed.

There must have been a great difference in the ceremonies once, since the stone is called "Tied" and also "Sleep Stone."

When our leader saw that all was ready, he said, "We must go in." He named Little Bull to be the Crack Shot and go in first; then he named Holding Eagle to sit next to the Crack Shot; then Wolfs Eyes went in and took his place at the head of the lodge; then the helper, Big Walk, went in. Whatever the leader does in singing and praying, the man sitting next to him is expected to give him assistance. The leader and his helper are the ones to offer prayers and do the singing, while the Crack Shot and the man next to him work together too. Their duty is to torture the men. Then the other men came in on both sides and took their places. Then there were two waiters selected by the leader. They were not named, nor is anyone named until the lodge is completed and ready to move in.

No excuses are allowed. When the leader says, "I select you as a waiter," one has no right to refuse. After this, we went in and took our places. The leader said, "Waiter, burn some incense," and, while the waiter burned it, the leader took his sacred articles out and held them in the smoke. He held up the cord, and while he was singing the song to the snares he made a motion as of throwing the loop to catch something. He did that three times, and the fourth time the Crack Shot jumped up and took the snare, saying, "Leader, you have snared everything; you have roped everything north, south, west, and east," meaning that then he had everything in the world caught in his snare.

There are many songs[12] to be sung by the leader and his helper. After he sings these songs, there is a special song for the waiter, who gets up and dances with the cord, making the sign of throwing the loop to catch something. Then, one of the men who is not married would say, "Waiter, I feel someone at my back."

Then the waiter looked and said, "There is a very handsome woman back

12. See Frances Densmore, *Mandan and Hidatsa Music* (Bureau of American Ethnology Bull. 80 [1923]), pp. 69–80.

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223 796 of you; it is an A-ci-ra'-wi'-a," meaning really a bear woman, for the origin was from the bears.

224 462 In early days when young men went out this way, the single girls would marry some of them before they left and then go out there. The women would prepare the meat from the mountain sheep and work on the hides while the men trapped. To secure these fine hides, women would marry a single man in order to get a chance to go out there.

223 796 The pits being dug, early the next morning we got up without having any breakfast and went to our pits. Some of the pits were old ones, but several new ones were made. Sometimes there would be two pits together, and then they would fix the last pit up and go into it. For their baits some had blood stored away while others had jackrabbits. Others had a hide fixed up so that it looked like some animal. Water was mixed with the dry blood and put on the bait. In the evening each man came out, and those who did not catch anything came home quietly, while those who had caught eagles would come in crying. When they heard someone come crying, the waiter would burn incense as the man with the eagle came into camp.

Eagle-trapping is called "Tied," when persons catching eagles are to kill them in the pit before bringing them to the lodge. The first man who came in that day was Little Bull. He had two birds with black tips. White Body was burning the incense. In case both the waiters were away, the leader would burn the incense himself. The next man who came in was Holding Eagle, and he had two birds with black tips. Black Bear caught two also. The saying is that, where you catch two eagles, they are a brother and a sister, for they travel together. These birds were all killed in the pit. The birds were brought in and placed at the head of the lodge in a row. The tails were brought in and placed on the buffalo head, each man keeping track of his own feathers.

223 777 The next day my brother, Little Bull, took me along, and we went into his pit. He caught four that day, and, when the fifth had landed on the bait, he told me to catch it by the feet, which I did. He helped me pull the bird down into the pit. He took me along to show me how to catch the birds. The next time he went out he caught three more, which made ten in all that he had caught. Three warbonnets could be made of them, and he had one tail extra. The leader said to him, "That is enough; you must not go out any more, or you will have bad luck." After that Little Bull did not go out any more.

223 The second time Holding Eagle went out he caught three, and the third time he caught two, so that he had seven. Black Bear caught two the first time, three the second time, and two the third time, making seven for him. Lance Owner did not have any luck in his pit, so he was advised to go into Little Bull's pit, where he caught two. Little Crow did not catch anything in his pit, so he was also told to go into Little Bull's pit, and he caught two there. Sitting Woman caught three; White Body did not catch any. Wolfs Eyes and his helper did not trap.

223 796 All these birds were killed in the pit, each trapper having a Baby Stone in his hole. While facing east, they broke the birds' necks, and in that way the spirits of the birds would return to their spirit home down the river.

There are two ways of trapping eagles. This time we followed the ceremony called "Tied" which originated with the black bear. The other way was the real eagle-trapping and in that ceremony they had ways that were different from the ceremony Wolfs Eyes used. In the other ceremony if a trapper fell down and tells the leader about it, his named is changed. This time we did

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not even get names when we began trapping. One morning the leader woke us and said, "There is water coming down," so we had to stop trapping. The bodies of the eagles were taken to the east side of the lodge and put on the ground. Then we all went back and ran toward the dead eagles and shot over them and then struck them. The eagles represented our enemies. That was why we had to do that. Then we broke camp and started for home. The birds had been put about two hundred yards from the medicine lodge. We cut the wings off, pulled the light feathers out, and left the bodies there. When we got back to the village the leader collected all the tails and went through a little ceremony to send the spirits of the eagles away. Sometimes they did that in the camp, but when we had to hurry, as in this case, for slush ice was forming in the river, we did it at the village. Sending the spirits away was done by making a feast and paying the leader to put on the sweat-lodge ceremony. He offered prayers to the birds and bears, asking the spirits of the birds to go away. Then he beat on a hide, and each one in the village, especially men, stood by their doors making much noise and pounding on the hide covering of the door. Then he took all those who were out trapping with him into the sweat lodge where they were cleansed by having water sprinkled on them.

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met the returning hunters at a short distance from the village, and the hunters dropped portions of the meat for them.

When the Missouri broke up in the spring large numbers of buffalo were drowned and floated down the river. The Mandans usually caught large quantities of these as they floated by, and esteemed them as better than the fresh meat. Henry says that meat was nearly always hung up till partially decayed, after which it was better liked. The intestines of the buffalo were considered a good food and were always eaten. The Mandans made pemmican, as did all of the plains tribes, grinding up the dried meat and packing it in parfleches, after which buffalo fat was poured in.

Probably the antelope were next in importance to the buffalo. These were caught in large bands by means of what were called parks. At the head of a coulée an enclosure of branches was made with a narrow opening from which two fences of branches led away in the shape of a funnel, extending for a mile or often more. The Indians, on horseback, by surrounding a band of antelopes could gradually work them towards this enclosure, through the gate of which they were at last forced to go. The entrance was then guarded and the hunters knocked the animals on the head with the stone war clubs; a hundred or more at a time were often killed in this fashion.

Wolves and foxes were trapped in pitfalls which were dug to a depth of eight or ten feet, covered with branches and baited with pieces of buffalo meat. Beaver and other small fur-bearing animals were caught in traps. Bears were killed only occasionally as the Indians did not like to attack them. Cat-fish and sturgeon, as well as smaller fish and turtles were caught along the river, where unios and snails were also gathered.

The larger birds were caught in a rather peculiar fashion. The hunters usually went to the Bad Lands to hunt them. There a pit was dug in some likely place. Bait of small pieces of meat was scattered about, after which the hunter concealed himself in the pit, dragging over the top a covering of branches with bait upon them. Then he waited patiently, often for a day or more till a bird should alight on the branches; as soon as this happened the bird was grasped and pulled down into

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223 the pit where it was dispatched and the hunter waited for another. This method was also used by the Hidatsa, and so in fact nearly all the Mandan hunting methods and customs were duplicated among their neighbors. The only important exception was the Mandan custom of giving a share of the meat to anyone who might come to the home of a successful hunter and ask for it. Henry tells us that the Hidatsa and Amahami did not have this charitable custom.

WAR:— Among most of the Indians, war was the chief occupation of the men, and the Mandans in this respect differed little from the other tribes. They were constantly in danger from their more numerous enemies, the Dakotas, and in addition frequently had disputes with other smaller bands. The Mandans were not a warlike people, and fought only when necessary; but when the time came they were among the bravest and most fearless warriors of the region. Maximilian says that they had been known to send war parties as far as the Rocky Mountains against the Blackfeet and as far east as the Red River against the Ojibwa. Their chief enemies were, however, the Dakota, the Cheyenne, and at times the Arikara. The custom of sending out war parties was not as usual here as among their neighbors, the Hidatsa. The system of rank in the village was to a considerable extent based upon military prowess; the wearing of different insignia which indicated each man's deeds was a common device. Those who had made a coup wore a wolf's tail at the heel of their moccasin. If a man was the first of a party to touch and kill an enemy, he painted a spiral line about his arm, with another winding in the opposite direction with three cross stripes. For the second enemy he painted his left legging a reddish brown. If he killed an enemy in equal fight before any other enemy was slain, he could put a wolf's tail around each foot. For the third coup two lengthwise stripes with three cross stripes were painted on the arm, this was the most honorable coup and no other distinctive marks were in use, except that another eagle feather might be worn in the hair for each additional coup. If a man made his coup after others were made, the end of the wolf's tail was cut off. Six little wooden sticks worn in the hair showed that a man

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

224 The wolf and the fox are sometimes shot with a gun, as well as the white hare, in the winter time, or they are caught in traps. They set for the wolves very strong traps. The prairie wolf is not easily caught, being very cautious. Foxes are caught in small traps, which are covered with brushwood and buffaloes' skulls, to conceal them. Many such traps are seen everywhere in the prairies, which are surrounded with small stakes, that the animals may not enter them sideways. Beavers are now caught, in great numbers, in iron traps, which they procure from the Whites. Small animals, such as the ermine, are caught with horsehair springes, set before their burrows. The manner in which birds of prey are caught is said to be very remarkable. ●223 The birdcatcher lies down at full length in a narrow pit made on purpose, and exactly large enough to hold him. As soon as he has lain down, the pit is covered with brushwood and hay, pieces of meat are laid upon it, and a crow, or some such bird, fastened to it. The eagle, or other bird of prey, is said to descend, and to sit down, in order to eat, on which the birdcatcher seizes it by the legs. I would not believe this had not men worthy of credit given me their word for it. In this manner they catch the eagle, called, by the English, the war-eagle, and the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), the Quiliou, or *oiseau de medicine*, of the Canadians, which I was not so fortunate as to meet with, and which they highly value, as I have already stated.

721 Next to the chase, war is the chief employment of the Indians, and military glory the highest object of their ambition. It is well known that Indian bravery is very different from that of the Whites; for wilfully to expose themselves to the enemy's fire would, in their eyes, not be bravery, but folly. Cunning and stratagem give them the advantage over the enemy; their strength lies in concealing their march, and surprises at daybreak. He who kills many enemies without sustaining any loss is the best warrior.

721 When a young man desires to establish his reputation in the field, he fasts for four or seven days, as long as his strength permits him, goes alone to the hills, complains and cries to 787 the lord of life, calls incessantly to the higher powers for their aid, and only goes home, sometimes, in the evening, to sleep. A dream suggests his medicine to him. If the lord of life makes 555 him dream of a piece of cherry-tree wood, or of an animal, it is a good omen. The young men who take the field with him have then confidence in his medicine. If he can perform an exploit his reputation is established. But whatever exploits he may perform, he acquires no respect if he does not make valuable presents; and they say of him, "He has indeed performed many exploits, but yet he is as much to be pitied as those whom he has killed." A man may have performed many exploits, and yet not be allowed to wear tufts of hair on his clothes, unless he carries a medicine pipe, and has been the leader of a war party. When a young man, who has never performed an exploit, is the first to kill an enemy on a warlike expedition, he 721 paints a spiral line round his arm, of whatever colour he pleases, and he may then wear a 555 whole wolf's tail at the ankle or heel of one foot. If he has first killed and touched the